MUSIC AND BAD MANNERS

by

CARL VAN VECHTEN

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Music and Bad Manners

By THE SAME AUTHOR

MUSIC AFTER THE GREAT WAR

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Music and Bad Manners

Carl Van Vechten

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To my Father

22857

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Music and Bad Manners

Music and Bad Manners

SINGERS, musicians of all kinds, are notoriously bad mannered. The storms of the Titan, Beethoven, the petty malevolences of Richard Wagner, the weak sulkiness of Chopin ("Chopin in displeasure was appalling," writes George Sand, "and as with me he always controlled himself it was as if he might die of suffocation") have all been recalled in their proper places in biographies and in fiction; but no attempt has been made heretofore, so far as I am aware, to lump similar anecdotes together under the somewhat castigating title I have chosen to head this article. Nor is it alone the performer who gives exhibitions of bad manners. (As a matter of fact, once an artist reaches the platform he is on his mettle, at his best. At home he — or she — may be ruthless in his passionate display of floods of "temperament." I have seen a soprano throw a pork roast on the floor at dinner, the day before a performance of Wagner's "consecrational festival play," with the shrill explanation, "Pork before *Parsifal!*" On the street he may shatter the clouds with his lightnings — as, indeed, Beethoven is said to have done — but on the stage he becomes, as a rule, a superhuman being, an in-

terpreter, a mere virtuoso. Of course, there are exceptions.) Audiences, as well, may be relied upon to behave badly on occasion. An auditor is not necessarily at his best in the concert hall. He may have had a bad dinner, or quarrelled with his wife before arriving. At any rate he has paid his money and it might be expected that he would make some demonstration of disapproval when he was displeased. The extraordinary thing is that he does not do so oftener. On the whole it must be admitted that audiences remain unduly calm at concerts, that they are unreasonably polite, indeed, to offensively inadequate or downright bad interpretations. I have sat through performances, for example, of the Russian Symphony Society in New York when I wondered how my fellow-sufferers could display such fortitude and patience. When *Prince Igor* was first performed at the Metropolitan Opera House the ballet, danced in defiance of all laws of common sense or beauty, almost compelled me to throw the first stone. The parable saved me. Still one doesn't need to be without sin to sling pebbles in an opera house. And it is a pleasure to remember that there have been occasions when audiences did speak up!

In those immeasurably sad pages in which

Henry Fothergill Chorley describes the last London appearance of Giuditta Pasta, recalling Pauline Viardot's beautiful remark (she, like Rachel, was hearing the great dramatic soprano for the first time), "It is like the *Cenacolo* of Da Vinci at Milan — a wreck of a picture, but the picture is the greatest picture in the world!" this great chronicler of the glories of the opera-stage recalls the attitude of the French actress: "There were artists present, who had then, for the first time, to derive some impression of a renowned artist — perhaps, with the natural feeling that her reputation had been exaggerated.— Among these was Rachel — whose bitter ridicule of the entire sad show made itself heard throughout the whole theatre, and drew attention to the place where she sat — one might even say, sarcastically enjoying the scene."

Chorley's description of an incident in the career of the dynamic Mme. Mara, a favourite in Berlin from 1771 to 1780, makes far pleasanter reading: "On leave of absence being denied to her when she wished to recruit her strength by a visit to the Bohemian *baden*, the songstress took the resolution of neglecting her professional duties, in the hope of being allowed to depart as worthless. The Czarovitch, Paul the

First of Russia, happened about that time to pay a visit to Berlin; and she was announced to appear in one of the grand parts. She pretended illness. The King sent her word, in the morning of the day, that she was to get well and sing her best. She became, of course, worse — could not leave her bed. Two hours before the opera began, a carriage, escorted by eight soldiers, was at her door, and the captain of the company forced his way into her chamber, declaring that their orders were to bring her to the theatre, dead or alive. 'You cannot; you see I am in bed.' 'That is of little consequence,' said the obdurate machine; 'we will take you, bed and all.' There was nothing for it but to get up and go to the theatre; dress, and resolve to sing without the slightest taste or skill. And this Mara did. She kept her resolution for the whole of the first act, till a thought suddenly seized her that she might be punishing herself in giving the Grand-Duke of Russia a bad opinion of her powers. A *bravura* came; and she burst forth with all her brilliancy, in particular distinguishing herself by a miraculous shake, which she sustained, and swelled, and diminished, with such wonderful art as to call down more applause than ever." This was the same Mara who walked out of the orchestra at a per-

formance of *The Messiah* at Oxford rather than stand during the singing of the *Hallelujah Chorus.*

In that curious series of anecdotes which Berlioz collected under the title, "Les Grotesques de la Musique," I discovered an account of a performance of a *Miserere* of Mercadante at the church of San Pietro in Naples, in the presence of a cardinal and his suite. The cardinal several times expressed his pleasure, and the congregation at two points, the *Redde Mihi* and the *Benigne fac, Domine,* broke in with applause and insisted upon repetitions! Berlioz also describes a rehearsal of Grétry's *La Rosière de Salency* at the Odéon, when that theatre was devoted to opera. The members of the orchestra were overcome with a sense of the ridiculous nature of the music they were performing and made strange sounds the while they played. The *chef d'orchestre* attempted to keep his face straight, and Berlioz thought he was scandalized by the scene. A little later, however, he found himself laughing harder than anybody else. The memory of this occasion gave him the inspiration some time later of arranging a concert of works of this order (in which, he assured himself, the music of the masters abounded), without forewarning the public of his purpose. He prepared the programme, including therein this same

overture of Grétry's, then a celebrated English air *Arm, Ye Brave*, a "sonata *diabolique*" for the violin, the quartet from a French opera in which this passage occurred:

> "J'aime assez les Hollandaises,
> Les Persanes, les Anglaises,
> Mais je préfère des Françaises
> L'esprit, la grâce et la gaîté,"

an instrumental march, the finale of the first act of an opera, a fugue on *Kyrie Eleison* from a Requiem Mass in which the music suggested anything but the words, variations for the bassoon on the melody of *Au Clair de la Lune*, and a symphony. Unfortunately for the trial of the experiment the rehearsal was never concluded. The executants got no further than the third number before they became positively hysterical. The public performance was never given, but Berlioz assures us that the average symphony concert audience would have taken the programme seriously and asked for more! It may be considered certain that in his choice of pieces Berlioz was making game of some of his contemporaries. . . .

In all the literature on the subject of music there are no more delightful volumes to be met with than those of J. B. Weckerlin, called "Mu-

siciana," "Nouveau Musiciana," and "Dernier Musiciana." These books are made up of anecdotes, personal and otherwise. From Bourdelot's "Histoire de la Musique" Weckerlin culled the following: "An equerry of Madame la Dauphine asked two of the court musicians to his home at Versailles for dinner one evening. They sang standing opposite the mantelpiece, over which hung a great mirror which was broken in six pieces by the force of tone; all the porcelain on the buffet resounded and shook." Weckerlin also recalls a caprice of Louis XI, who one day commanded the Abbé de Baigne, who had already invented many musical instruments, to devise a harmony out of pigs. The Abbé asked for some money, which was grudgingly given, and constructed a pavilion covered with velvet, under which he placed a number of pigs. Before this pavilion he arranged a white table with a keyboard constructed in such a fashion that the displacing of a key stuck a pig with a needle. The sounds evoked were out of the ordinary, and it is recorded that the king was highly diverted and asked for more. Auber's enthusiasm for his own music, usually concealed under an indifferent air, occasionally expressed itself in strange fashion. Mme. Damoreau recounted to Weckerlin how, when the

composer completed an air in the middle of the night, even at three or four o'clock in the morning, he rushed to her apartment. Dragging a pianoforte to her bed, he insisted on playing the new song over and over to her, while she sang it, meanwhile making the changes suggested by this extraordinary performance.

More modern instances come to mind. Maria Gay is not above nose-blowing and expectoration in her interpretation of Carmen, physical acts in the public performance of which no Spanish cigarette girl would probably be caught ashamed. Yet it may be doubted if they suit the music of Bizet, or the Meilhac and Halévy version of Merimée's creation. . . . A story has been related to me — I do not vouch for the truth of it — that during a certain performance of *Carmen* at the Opéra-Comique in Paris a new singer, at some stage in the proceedings, launched that dreadful French word which Georges Feydeau so ingenuously allowed his heroine to project into the second act of *La Dame de chez Maxim*, with a result even more startling than that which attended Bernard Shaw's excursion into the realms of the expletive in his play, *Pygmalion*. It is further related of this performance of *Carmen*, which is said to have sadly disturbed the " traditions," that

in the excitement incident to her début the lady positively refused to allow Don José to kill her. Round and round the stage she ran while the perspiring tenor tried in vain to catch her. At length, the music of the score being concluded, the curtain fell on a Carmen still alive; the *salle* was in an uproar.

I find I cannot include Chaliapine's Basilio in my list of bad mannered stage performances, although his trumpetings into his handkerchief disturbed many of New York's professional writers. *Il Barbiere* is a farcical piece, and the music of Rossini hints at the Rabelaisian humours of the dirty Spanish priest. In any event, it was the finest interpretation of the rôle that I have ever seen or heard and, with the splendid ensemble (Mme. Sembrich was the Rosina, Mr. Bonci, the count, and Mr. Campanari, the Figaro), the comedy went with such joyous abandon (the first act finale to the accompaniment of roars of laughter from the stalls) that I am inclined to believe the performance could not be bettered in this generation.

The late Algernon St. John Brenon used to relate a history about Emma Eames and a recalcitrant tenor. The opera was *Lohengrin*, I believe, and the question at issue was the position of a certain couch. Mme. Eames wished it placed

here; the tenor there. As always happens in arguments concerning a Wagnerian music-drama, at some point the Bayreuth tradition was invoked, although I have forgotten whether that tradition favoured the soprano or her opponent in this instance. In any case, at the rehearsal the tenor seemed to have won the battle. When at the performance he found the couch in the exact spot which had been designated by the lady his indignation was all the greater on this account. With as much regard for the action of the drama as was consistent with so violent a gesture he gave the couch a violent shove with his projected toe, with the intention of pushing it into his chosen locality. He retired with a howl, nursing a wounded member. The couch had been nailed to the floor!

It is related that Marie Delna was discovered washing dishes at an inn in a small town near Paris. Her benefactors took her to the capital and placed her in the Conservatoire. She always retained a certain peasant obstinacy, and it is said that during the course of her instruction when she was corrected she frequently replied, "Je m'en vais." Against this phrase argument was unavailing and Mme. Delna, as a result, acquired a habit of having her own way. Her Orphée was

(and still is, I should think) one of the notable achievements of our epoch. It must have equalled Pauline Viardot's performance dramatically, and transcended it vocally. After singing the part several hundred times she naturally acquired certain habits and mannerisms, tricks both of action and of voice. Still, it is said that when she came to the Metropolitan Opera House she offered, at a rehearsal, to defer to Mr. Toscanini's ideas. He, the rumour goes, gave his approval to her interpretation on this occasion. Not so at the performance. Those who have heard it can never forget the majesty and beauty of this characterization, as noble a piece of stage-work as we have seen or heard in our day. At her début in the part in New York Mme. Delna was superb, vocally and dramatically. In the celebrated air, *Che faro senza Euridice*, the singer followed the tradition, doubly established by the example of Mme. Viardot in the great revival of the mid-century, of singing the different stanzas of the air in different *tempi*. In her slowest *adagio* the conductor became impatient. He beat his stick briskly across his desk and whipped up the orchestra. There was soon a hiatus of two bars between singer and musicians. It was a terrible moment, but the singer won the victory. She *turned her*

back on the conductor and continued to sing in her own time. The organ tones rolled out and presently the audience became aware of a junction between the two great forces. Mr. Toscanini was vanquished, but he never forgave her.

During the opera season of 1915–16, operagoers were treated to a diverting exhibition. Mme. Geraldine Farrar, just returned from a fling at three five-reel cinema dramas, elected to instil a bit of moving picture realism into *Carmen.* Fresh with the memory of her prolonged and brutal scuffle in the factory scene as it was depicted on the screen, Mme. Farrar attempted something like it in the opera, the first act of which was enlivened with sundry blows and kicks. More serious still were her alleged assaults on the tenor (Mr. Caruso) in the third act which, it is said, resulted in his clutching her like a struggling eel, to prevent her interference with his next note. There was even a suggestion of disagreement in the curtain calls which ensued. All these incidents of an enlivening evening were duly and impressively chronicled in the daily press.

There is, of course, Vladimir de Pachmann. Everybody who has attended his recitals has come under the spell of his beautiful tone and has been annoyed by his bad manners. For, curiously

enough, the two qualities have become inseparable with him, especially in recent years. Once in Chicago I saw the strange little pianist sit down in front of his instrument, rise again, gesticulate, and leave the stage. Returning with a stage-hand he pointed to his stool; it was not satisfactory. A chair was brought in, tried, and found wanting; more gesticulation — this time wilder. At length, after considerable discussion between Mr. de Pachmann and the stage-hand, all in view of the audience, it was decided that nothing would do but that some one must fetch the artist's own piano bench from his hotel, which, fortunately, adjoined the concert hall. This was accomplished in the course of time. In the interval the pianist did not leave the platform. He sat at the back on the chair which had been offered him as a substitute for the offending stool and entertained his audience with a spectacular series of grimaces.

On another occasion this singular genius arrested his fingers in the course of a performance of one of Chopin's études. His ears were enraptured, it would seem, by his own rendition of a certain run; over and over again he played it, now faster, now more slowly; at times almost slowly enough to give the student in the front row a glimpse of the magic fingering. With a sudden change of man-

ner he announced, "This is the way Godowsky would play this scale": great velocity but a dry tone. Then, "And now Pachmann again!" The magic fingers stroked the keys.

Even as an auditor de Pachmann sometimes exploits his eccentricities. Josef Hofmann once told me the following story: De Pachmann was sitting in the third row at a concert Rubinstein gave in his prime. De Pachmann burst into hilarious laughter, rocking to and fro. Rubinstein was playing beautifully and de Pachmann's neighbour, annoyed, demanded why he was laughing. De Pachmann could scarcely speak as he pointed to the pianist on the stage and replied, "He used the fourth finger instead of the third in that run. Isn't it funny?"

I cannot take Vladimir de Pachmann to task for these amusing bad manners! But they annoy the *bourgeois*. We should most of us be glad to have Oscar Wilde brilliant at our dinner parties, even though he ate peas with his knife; and Napoleon's generalship would have been as effective if he had been an omnivorous reader of the works of Laura Jean Libbey. But one must not dwell too long on de Pachmann. One might be tempted to devote an entire essay to the relation of his eccentricities.

Another pianist, also a composer, claims attention: Alberto Savinio. You may find a photolithograph of Savinio's autograph manuscript of *Bellovées Fatales, No, 12*, in that curious periodical entitled "291," the number for April, 1915. There is a programme, which reads as follows:

LA PASSION DES ROTULES

La Femme: Ah! Il m'a touché de sa jambe de caoutchouc! Ma-ma! Ma-ma!

L'Homme: Tutto s'ha di rosa, Maria, per te. . . .

La Femme: Ma-ma! Ma-ma!

There are indications as to how the composer wishes his music to be played, sometimes *glissando* and sometimes "*avec des poings.*" The rapid and tortuous passages between the black and white keys would test the contortionistic qualities of any one's fingers. Savinio, it is said, at his appearances in Paris, actually played until his fingers *bled.* When he had concluded, indeed, the ends of his fingers were crushed and bruised and the keyboard was red with blood. Albert Gleizes, quoted by Walter Conrad Arensberg, is my authority for this bizarre history of music and bad manners. I have not seen (or heard) Savinio perform. But when I told this tale to Leo Ornstein he assured me

that he frequently had had a similar experience.

Romain Rolland in "Jean-Christophe" relates an incident which is especially interesting because it has a foundation in fact. Something of the sort happened to Hugo Wolf when an orchestra performed his *Penthesilea* overture for the first time. It is a curious example of bad manners in which both the performers and the audience join.

"At last it came to Christophe's symphony." (I am quoting from Gilbert Cannan's translation.) "He saw from the way the orchestra and the people in the hall were looking at his box that they were aware of his presence. He hid himself. He waited with the catch at his heart which every musician feels at the moment when the conductor's wand is raised and the waters of the music gather in silence before bursting their dam. He had never yet heard his work played. How would the creatures of his dreams live? How would their voices sound? He felt their roaring within him; and he leaned over the abyss of sounds waiting fearfully for what should come forth.

"What did come forth was a nameless thing, a shapeless hotchpotch. Instead of the bold columns which were to support the front of the building the chords came crumbling down like a building in ruins; there was nothing to be seen but the

dust of mortar. For a moment Christophe was not quite sure whether they were really playing his work. He cast back for the train, the rhythm of his thoughts; he could not recognize it; it went on babbling and hiccoughing like a drunken man clinging close to the wall, and he was overcome with shame, as though he himself had been seen in that condition. It was to no avail to think that he had not written such stuff; when an idiotic interpreter destroys a man's thoughts he has always a moment of doubt when he asks himself in consternation if he is himself responsible for it. The audience never asks such a question; the audience believes in the interpreter, in the singers, in the orchestra whom they are accustomed to hear, as they believe in their newspaper; they cannot make a mistake; if they say absurd things, it is the absurdity of the author. This audience was the less inclined to doubt because it liked to believe. Christophe tried to persuade himself that the *Kapellmeister* was aware of the hash and would stop the orchestra and begin again. The instruments were not playing together. The horn had missed his beat and had come in a bar too late; he went on for a few minutes and then stopped quietly to clean his instrument. Certain passages for the oboe had absolutely disappeared. It was impossi-

ble for the most skilled ear to pick up the thread of the musical idea, or even to imagine there was one. Fantastic instrumentations, humoristic sallies became grotesque through the coarseness of the execution. It was lamentably stupid, the work of an idiot, of a joker who knew nothing of music. Christophe tore his hair. He tried to interrupt, but the friend who was with him held him back, assuring him that the *Herr Kapellmeister* must surely see the faults of the execution and would put everything right — that Christophe must not show himself and that if he made any remark it would have a very bad effect. He made Christophe sit at the very back of the box. Christophe obeyed, but he beat his head with his fists; and every fresh monstrosity drew from him a groan of indignation and misery.

" 'The wretches! The wretches! . . .'

" He groaned and squeezed his hands tight to keep from crying out.

" Now mingled with the wrong notes there came up to him the muttering of the audience, who were beginning to be restless. At first it was only a tremor; but soon Christophe was left without a doubt; they were laughing. The musicians of the orchestra had given the signal; some of them did not conceal their hilarity. The audience, certain

then that the music was laughable, rocked with laughter. This merriment became general; it increased at the return of a very rhythmical motif with the double-basses accentuated in a burlesque fashion. Only the *Kapellmeister* went on through the uproar imperturbably beating time.

"At last they reached the end (the best things come to an end). It was the turn of the audience. They exploded with delight, an explosion which lasted for several minutes. Some hissed; others applauded ironically; the wittiest of all shouted 'Encore!' A bass voice coming from a stage box began to imitate the grotesque motif. Other jokers followed suit and imitated it also. Some one shouted 'Author!' It was long since these witty folk had been so highly entertained.

"When the tumult was calmed down a little the *Kapellmeister*, standing quite impassive with his face turned towards the audience, though he was pretending not to see it (the audience was still supposed to be non-existent), made a sign to the audience that he was about to speak. There was a cry of 'Ssh,' and silence. He waited a moment longer; then (his voice was curt, cold, and cutting):

"'Gentlemen,' he said, 'I should certainly not have let *that* be played through to the end if I had

not wished to make an example of the gentleman who has dared to write offensively of the great Brahms.'

"That was all; jumping down from his stand he went out amid cheers from the delighted audience. They tried to recall him; the applause went on for a few minutes longer. But he did not return. The orchestra went away. The audience decided to go too. The concert was over.

"It had been a good day."

Von Bülow once stopped his orchestra at a public performance to remonstrate with a lady with a fan in the front row of seats. "Madame," he said gravely, "I must beg you to cease fanning yourself in three-four time while I am conducting in four-four time!"

Here are a few personal recollections of bad mannered audiences. A performance of *The Magic Flute* in Chicago comes to mind. Fritzi Scheff, the Papagena, and Giuseppe Campanari, the Papageno, had concluded their duet in the last act amidst a storm of applause, in face of which the conductor sped on to the entrance of the Queen of the Night. Mme. Sembrich entered and sang a part of her recitative unheard. One could see, however, that her jaws opened and closed with the mechanism incidental to tone-production. After

a few bars she retired defeated and the bad mannered audience continued to shout and applaud until that unspeakable bit of nonsense which runs "Pa-pa-pa," etc., was repeated. Mme. Sembrich appeared no more that day.

Another stormy audience I encountered at a concert of the Colonne Orchestra in Paris. Those who sit in the gallery at these concerts at the Chatelet Theatre are notoriously opinionated. There the battles of Richard Strauss and Debussy have been fought. The gallery crowd always comes early because seats in the top of the house are unreserved. They cost a franc or two; I forget exactly how much, but I have often sat there. To pass the time until the concert begins, and also to show their indifference to musical literature and the opinions of others, the galleryites fashion a curious form of spill, with one end in a point and the other feathered like an arrow, out of the pages of the annotated programmes. These are then sent sailing, in most instances with infinite dexterity and incredible velocity, over the heads of the arriving audience. The objective point is the very centre of the back cloth on the stage, a spot somewhat above the kettle-drum. A successful shot always brings forth a round of applause. But this is (or was) an episode incident to any

Colonne concert. I am describing an occasion.

The concert took place during the season of poor Colonne's final illness (now he lies buried in that curiously remote avenue of Père-Lachaise where repose the ashes of Oscar Wilde). Gabriel Pierné, his successor, had already assumed the bâton, and he conducted the concert in question. Anton Van Rooy was the soloist and he had chosen to sing two very familiar (and very popular in Paris) Wagner excerpts, Wotan's Farewell from *Die Walküre*, and the air which celebrates the evening star from *Tannhäuser*. (In this connection I might state that in this same winter — 1908–9 — *Das Rheingold* was given *in concert form* — it had not yet been performed at the Opéra — on two consecutive Sundays at the Lamoureux Concerts in the Salle Gaveau to *standing room only*.) The concert proceeded in orderly fashion until Mr. Van Rooy appeared; then the uproar began. The gallery hooted, and screamed, and yelled. All the terrible noises which only a Paris crowd can invent were hurled from the dark recesses of that gallery. The din was appalling, terrifying. Mr. Van Rooy nervously fingered a sheet of music he held in his hands. Undoubtedly visions of the first performance of *Tannhäuser* at the Paris Opéra passed through his mind. He

may also have considered the possibility of escaping to the Gare du Nord, with the chance of catching a train for Germany before the mob could tear him into bits. Mr. Pierné, who knew his Paris, faced the crowd, while the audience below peered up and shuddered, with something of the fright of the aristocrats during the first days of the Revolution. Then he held up his hand and, in time, the modest gesture provoked a modicum of silence. In that silence some one shrieked out the explanation: "*Tannhäuser* avant *Walküre*." That was all. The gallery was not satisfied with the order of the programme. The readjustment was quickly made, the parts distributed to the orchestra, and Mr. Van Rooy sang Wolfram's air before Wotan's. It may be said that never could he have hoped for a more complete ovation, a more flattering reception than that which the Parisian audience accorded him when he had finished. The applause was veritably deafening.

I have related elsewhere at some length my experiences at the first Paris performance of Igor Strawinsky's ballet, *The Sacrifice to the Spring*, an appeal to primitive emotion through a nerve-shattering use of rhythm, staged in ultra-modern style by Waslav Nijinsky. Chords and legs seemed disjointed. Flying arms synchronized

marvellously with screaming clarinets. But this first audience would not permit the composer to be heard. Cat-calls and hisses succeeded the playing of the first few bars, and then ensued a battery of screams, countered by a foil of applause. We warred over art (some of us thought it was and some thought it wasn't). The opposition was bettered at times; at any rate it was a more thrilling battle than Strauss conceived between the Hero and his enemies in *Heldenleben* and the celebrated scenes from *Die Meistersinger* and *The Rape of the Lock* could not stand the comparison. Some forty of the protestants were forced out of the theatre but that did not quell the disturbance. The lights in the auditorium were fully turned on but the noise continued and I remember Mlle. Piltz executing her strange dance of religious hysteria on a stage dimmed by the blazing light in the auditorium, seemingly to the accompaniment of the disjointed ravings of a mob of angry men and women. Little by little, at subsequent performances of the work the audiences became more mannerly, and when it was given in concert in Paris the following year it was received with applause.

Some of my readers may remember the demonstration directed (supposedly) against American

singers when the Metropolitan Opera Company invaded Paris some years ago for a spring season. The opening opera was *Aïda*, and all went well until the first scene of the second act, in which the reclining Amneris chants her thoughts while her slaves dance. Here the audience began to give signs of disapproval, which presently broke out into open hissing, and finally into a real hullabaloo. Mme. Homer, nothing daunted, continued to sing. She afterwards told me that she had never sung with such force and intensity. And in a few moments she broke the spell, and calmed the riot.

Arthur Nikisch once noted that players of the bassoon were more sensitive than the other members of his orchestra; he found them subject to quick fits of temper, and intolerant of criticism. He attributed this to the delicate mechanism of the instrument which required the nicest apportionment of breath. Clarinet players, he discovered, were less sensitive. One could joke with them in reason; while horn players were as tractable as Newfoundland dogs! — A case of a sensitive pianist comes to mind, brought to bay by as rude an audience as I can recall. Mr. Paderewski was playing Beethoven's C sharp minor sonata at one of these morning musicales arranged at the

smart hotels so that the very rich may see more intimately the well-known artists of the concert and opera stage, when some women started to go out. In his following number, Couperin's *La Bandoline*, the interruption became intolerable and he stopped playing. "Those who do not wish to hear me will kindly leave the room immediately," he said, "and those who wish to remain will kindly take their seats." The outflow continued, while those who remained seated began to hiss. "I am astonished to find people in New York leaving while an artist is playing," the pianist added. Then some one started to applaud; the applause deepened, and finally Mr. Paderewski consented to play again and took his place on the bench before his instrument.

The incident was the result of the pianist's well-known aversion to appearing in conjunction with other artists. He had finally agreed to do so on this occasion provided he would be allowed to play after the others had concluded their performances. There had been many recalls for the singer and violinist who preceded him and it was well after one o'clock (the concert had begun at eleven) before he walked on the platform. Now one o'clock is a very late hour at a fashionable morning musicale. Some of those present were doubtless hun-

gry; others, perhaps, had trains to catch; while there must have been a goodly number who had heard all the music they wanted to hear that morning. There was a very pretty ending to the incident. Once he had begun, Mr. Paderewski played for an hour and twenty minutes, and the faithful ones, who had remained seated, applauded so much when he finally rose from the bench, even after he had added several numbers to the printed programme, that the echoes of the clapping hands accompanied him to his motor.

I have reserved for the last a description of a concert given at the Dal Verme Theatre in Milan by the Italian Futurists. The account is culled from the "Corriere della Sera" of that city, and the translation is that which appeared in "International Music and Drama":

"At the Dal Verme a Futurist concert of 'intonarumori' was to be held last night, but instead of this there was an uproarious din intoned both by the public and the Futurists which ended in a free-for-all fight.

"In a speech which was listened to with sufficient attention, Marinetti, the poet, announced that this was to be the first public trial of a new device invented by Luigi Russelo, a Futurist painter. This instrument is called the 'noise-

maker ' and its purpose is to render a new kind of music. Modern life vibrates with all sorts of noises; music therefore must render this sensation. This, in brief, is the idea. In order to develop it Russelo had invented several types of noise-makers, each of which renders a different sound.

" After Marinetti's speech the curtain went up and the new orchestra appeared in all its glory amidst the bellowings of the public. The famous ' noise-intonators ' proved to be made out of a sort of bass-drum with an immense trumpet attached to it, the latter looking very much like a gramaphone horn. Behind the instrument sat the players, whose only function was to turn the crank rhythmically in order to create the harmonic noise. They looked, while performing this agreeable task, like a squad of knife-grinders. But it was impossible to hear the music. The public was unconditionally intolerant. We only caught here and there a faint buzz and growl. Then everything was drowned in the billowing seas of howls, jeers, hisses, and cat-calls. What they were hissing at, it being impossible to hear the music, was not quite clear. They hissed just for the fun of it. It was a case of art for art's sake. Painter Russelo, however, continued undisturbed to direct his mighty battery of musical howitzers

and his professors kept on grinding their pieces with a beautiful serenity of mind, all the while the tumult increasing to redoubtable proportions. The consequence was that those who went to the Dal Verme for the purpose of listening to Futurist music had to give up all hopes and resign themselves to hear the bedlam of the public.

"In vain did Marinetti attempt to speak, begging them to be quiet for a while and assuring them that they would be allowed a whole carnival of howls at the end of the concert — the public wanted to hiss and there was no way to check it. But Russelo kept right on. He conducted with imperturbable solemnity the three pieces we were supposed to hear: *The Awakening of a Great City, A Dinner on a Kursaal Terrace,* and *A Meet of Automobiles and Aeroplanes.* Nobody heard anything, but Russelo rendered everything conscientiously. The only thing we were able to find out about Futurist music is that the noise of the orchestra is by no means too loud, or at least not louder than impromptu choruses.

"But the worst was reserved for the middle of the third piece. The exchange of hot words and very old-fashioned courtesies had now become ultra-vivacious and was being punctuated with several projectiles and an occasional blow. At

this point, Marinetti, Boccioni, Carra, and other Futurists jumped into the pit and began to distribute all sorts of blows to the infuriated spectators. The new Futurist style enables us to synthesize the scene. Blows. Carbineers. Inspectors. Cushions and chairs flying about. Howls. Public standing on chairs. Concert goes on. More howls, shrieks, curses, and thunderous insults. Futurists are led back to stage by gendarmes. Public slowly passes out. Marinetti and followers pass out before public. Again howls, invectives, guffaws, and fist blows. Piazza Cardusio. More blows. Galleria. Ditto. Futurists enter Savini's café while pugilistic matches go merrily on. Mob attempts to storm stronghold. Iron gates close. Futurists are shut in, in good condition, save few torn hats. Mob slowly calms down and disperses. The end."

New York, May, 1916.

Music for the Movies

"O Tempora! O Movies!"

W. B. Chase.

Music for the Movies

DESPITE the fact that it would seem that the moving picture drama had opened up new worlds to the modern musician, no important composer, so far as I am aware, has as yet turned his attention to the writing of music for the films. If the cinema drama is in its infancy, as some would have us believe, then we may be sure that the time is not far distant when moving picture scores will take their places on the musicians' book-shelves alongside those of operas, symphonies, masses, and string quartets. In the meantime, entirely ignorant of the truth (or oblivious to it, or merely helpless, as the case may be) that writing music for moving pictures is a new art, which demands a new point of view, the directors of the picture theatres are struggling with the situation as best they may. Under the circumstances it is remarkable, on the whole, how swiftly and how well the demand for music with the silent drama has been met. Certainly the music is usually on a level with (or of a better quality than) the type of entertainment offered. But the directors have not definitely tackled the problem; they still continue to try to force old wine into new bottles, arranging and re-arranging mel-

ody and harmony which was contrived for quite other occasions and purposes. Even when scores have been written for pictures the result has not shown any imaginative advance over the arranged score. It is strange, but it has occurred to no one that the moving picture demands a *new* kind of music.

The composers, I should imagine, are only waiting to be asked to write it. Certainly none of them has ever shown any hesitancy about composing incidental music for the spoken drama. Mendelssohn wrote strains for *A Midsummer Night's Dream* which seemed pledged to immortality until Granville Barker ignored them; the Wedding March is still in favour in Kankakee and Keokuk. Beethoven illustrated Goethe's *Egmont;* Sir Arthur Sullivan penned a score for *The Tempest;* Schubert was inspired to put down some of his most ravishing notes for a stupid play called *Rosamunde;* Greig's *Peer Gynt* music is more often performed than the play. More recent instances of incidental music for dramas are Saint-Saëns's score for Brieux's *La Foi,* Mascagni's for *The Eternal City,* and Richard Strauss's for *Le Bourgeois Gentilhomme.* Is it necessary to continue the list? I have only, after all, put down a few of the obvious examples (passing by the thousands

upon thousands of scores devised by lesser composers for lesser plays) that would spring at once to any musician's mind. Of course it has usually been the poetic drama (do we ever hear Shakespeare or Rostand without it?) which has seemed to call for incidental music but it has accompanied (with more or less disastrous consequences, to be sure) the unfolding of many a "drawing-room" play; especially during the eighties.

When the first moving picture was exposed on the screen it seems to have occurred to its projector at once that some kind of music must accompany its unreeling. The silence evidently appalled him. A moving picture is not unlike a ballet in that it depends entirely upon action (it differs from a ballet in that the action is not necessarily rhythmic) — and whoever heard of a ballet performed without music? Sound certainly has its value in creating an atmosphere and in emphasizing the "thrill" of the moving picture, especially when the sound is selected and co-ordinated. It may also divert the attention. On the whole, more photographed plays follow the general lines of *Lady Windemere's Fan* or *Peg o' My Heart* than of poetic dramas such as *Cymbeline* or *La Samaritaine*. The problem here, however, is not the same as in the spoken drama. For in motion

pictures a poetic play sheds its poetry and becomes, like its neighbour, a skeleton of action. There is no conceivable distinction in the "movies" (beyond one created by preference, or taste, or the quality of the performance and the photography) between Dante's *Inferno* and a picture in which the beloved Charles Chaplin looms large. The directors of the moving picture companies have tried to meet this problem; that they have not wholly succeeded so far is not entirely their fault.

It is no easy matter, for example, in a theatre in which the films are changed daily (this is the general rule even in the larger houses), for the musicians (or musician) to arrange a satisfactory accompaniment for 5,000 feet of action which includes everything from an earthquake in Cuba to a dinner in Park Lane, and it is scarcely possible, even if the distributors be so inclined (as they frequently are nowadays) to furnish a music score which will answer the purposes of the different sized bands, ranging from a full orchestra to an upright piano, *solo.* As for the pictures without pre-arranged scores, the orchestra leaders and pianists must do the best they can with them.

In some houses there is an attitude of total disrespect paid towards the picture by the *chef d'or-*

chestre. He arranges his musical programme as if he were giving a concert, not at all with a view to effectively accompanying the picture. In a theatre on Second Avenue in New York, for example, I have heard an orchestra play the whole of Beethoven's First Symphony as an accompaniment to Irene Fenwick's performance of *The Woman Next Door.* As the symphony came to an end before the picture it was supplemented by a Waldteufel waltz, *Les Patineurs.* The result, in this instance, was not altogether incongruous or even particularly displeasing, and it occurred to me that if one had to listen to music while the third act of *Hedda Gabler* were being enacted one would prefer to hear something like Boccherini's celebrated minuet or a light Mozart dance rather than anything ostensibly contrived to fit the situation. In the latter instance the result would be sure to be unbearable bathos.

On the other hand there are certain players for pictures who remind one by their methods of the anxiety of Richard Strauss to describe every peacock and bean mentioned in any of his opera-books. If a garden is exposed on the screen one hears *The Flowers That Bloom in the Spring;* a love scene is the signal for *Un Peu d'Amour;* a cross or any religious episode suggests *The Ros-*

ary to these ingenuous musicians; Japan brings a touch of *Madame Butterfly;* a proposal of marriage, *O Promise Me;* and a farewell, Tosti's *Goodbye!* This expedient of appealing through the intellect to the emotions, it may be admitted, has the stamp of approval of no less a composer than Richard Wagner.

Lacking the authority of real moving picture music (which a new composer must rise to invent) the safest way (not necessarily the *best* way) is the middle course — one method for this, another for that. One of the difficulties is to arrange a music score for a theatre with a large orchestra, where the leader must plan his score — or have it planned for him — for an entire picture before his orchestra can play a note. Music cues must be definite: twenty bars of *Alexander's Ragtime Band,* seventeen of *The Ride of the Valkyries,* ten of *Vissi d'Arte,* etc. An ingenious young man has discovered a way by which music and action may be exactly synchronized. I feel the impulse to quote extensively from the somewhat vivid report of his achievement, published in one of the motion picture weekly journals: "Here was a man-sized job — how to measure the action of the picture to the musical score, so that they would both come out equal at every part of the picture, and would be

so exact that any orchestra might take the score and follow the movement of the play with absolute correctness. It was a question primarily of mathematics, but even so it was some time before a system of computation was devised before the undertaking was gotten down to a certainty. As an illustration, on the opening night of one of the most notable photoplay productions now before the public, the orchestra, notwithstanding a three weeks' rehearsal, found at the conclusion of the picture that it was a page and a half behind the play's action in the musical setting." Then we learn that Frank Stadler of New York " provided the remedy for this condition of affairs." It is impossible to resist the temptation to quote further from this extremely racy account. " He remembered that Beethoven had overcome the difficulty of proper timing for his sonatas by a mechanical arrangement known as the metronome, invented by a friend of his. This is an arrangement with a little bell attached which may be set for the movement of the music and used as an exact guide to the right measure, the bell giving warning at the expiration of each period so that the leader knows whether he is in time or not." Mr. Stadler then began the measurement of a film with a metronome, a stenographer, and a watch.

He found that the film ran ten feet to every eight seconds and he set the metronome for eight second periods accordingly. "The stenographer made a note of the action of the picture each time the bell rang, with the result that when the entire picture had been run Mr. Stadler had a complete record of the production. All that was necessary then was to select from the classics and the popular melodies the music which would give a suitable atmosphere and a harmonious accompaniment to the theme of the play, so synchronizing the music with the eight second periods that every bar of it fitted the spirit of the many score of scenes of the production."

The single man orchestra, the player of the upright piano, need not make so many preparatory gestures. He may with impunity, if he be of an inventive turn of mind, or if his memory be good, improvise his score as the picture unreels itself for the first time before what may very well be his astonished vision; and, after that, he may vary his accompaniment, as the shows of the day progress, improving it here or there, or not, as the case may be, keeping generally as near to his original performance as possible. Of course he puts a good deal of reliance on rum-ti-tum shivery passages (known to orchestra leaders as "*agits*"—

an abbreviation of *agitato;* a page or two of them is distributed to every member of a moving picture band) to accompany moments of excitement. This music you will remember if you have ever attended a performance of a Lincoln J. Carter melodrama in which a train was wrecked, or a hero rescued from the teeth of a saw, or a heroine pursued by bloodhounds. (Those were the good old days!) Recently I heard a pianist in a moving picture house on Fourteenth Street in New York eke out a half-hour with similar poundings on two or three well-used chords (well used even in the time of Hadyn). The scenes represented the whole of a two-act opera, and the ambitious pianist was trying to give his audience the effect of singers (principals and chorus) and orchestra with his three chords. (Shades of Arnold Schoenberg!)

A certain periodical devoted to the interests of the moving picture trade, conducts a department as first aid to the musical conductors and pianists who figure at these shows. In a recent number the editor of this department gives it as his solemn opinion that musicians who read fiction are the best equipped for picture playing. Then, with an almost tragic parenthesis, he continues, "Reading fiction is the last diversion that the av-

erage musician will follow. He feels that all the necessary romance is to be found in his music." Facts are dead, says this editor in substance, but fiction is living and should make you weep. When you cry, all that remains for you to do is to think of a tune which will synchronize with the cause of your tears; this will serve you later when a similar scene occurs in a film drama.

There is one tune which any capable moving picture pianist has found will synchronize with any Keystone picture (for the benefit of the uninitiated I may state that in the Keystone farces some one gets kicked or knocked down or spat upon several times in almost every scene). I do not know what the tune is, but wherever Keystone pictures are shown, in Cedar Rapids, Iowa; Grand Rapids, Michigan; Chicago, and even New York, I have heard it. When a character falls into the water (and at least ten of them invariably do) the pianist may vary the tune by sitting on the piano or by upsetting a chair. In one theatre I have known him to cause glass to be shattered behind the screen at a moment when the picture exposed a similar scene. How Marinetti would like that!

However, the day of this sort of thing is rapidly

approaching its close, I venture to say. Some of the firms are already issuing arranged music scores for their productions (one may note in passing the score which accompanied Geraldine Farrar's screen performance of *Carmen*, largely selected from the music of Bizet's opera, and Victor Herbert's original score for *The Fall of a Nation*, a score which does not take full advantage of the new technique of the cinema drama). It will not be long before an enterprising director engages an enterprising musician to compose music for a picture. For the same reason that d'Annunzio, very early in the career of the moving picture, wrote a scenario for a film, I should not be surprised to learn that Richard Strauss was under contract to construct an accompaniment to a screened drama. It will be very loud music and it will require an orchestra of 143 men to interpret it and probably the composer himself will conduct the first performance, and, later, excerpts will be given by the Boston Symphony Orchestra and the critics will say, in spite of Philip Hale's diverting programme notes, that this music should never be played except in conjunction with the picture for which it was written. Mascagni is another composer who should find an excellent field for his tal-

ent in writing tone-poems for pictures, although he would contrive nothing more daring than a well-arranged series of illustrative melodies.

But put Igor Strawinsky, or some other modern genius, to work on this problem and see what happens! The musician of the future should revel in the opportunity the moving picture gives him to create a new form. This form differs from that of the incidental music for a play in that the flow of tone may be continuous and because one never needs to soften the accompaniment so that the voices may be heard; it differs from the music for a ballet in that the scene shifts constantly, and consequently the time-signatures and the mood and the key must be as constantly shifting. The swift flash from scene to scene, the "cut-back," the necessary rapidity of the action, all are adapted to inspire the futurist composer to brilliant effort; a tinkle of this and a smash of that, without "working-out" or development; illustration, comment, piquant or serious, that's what the new film music should be. The ultimate moving picture score will be something more than sentimental accompaniment.

New York, November 10, 1915.

Spain and Music

"Il faut méditerraniser la musique."

Nietzsche.

Spain and Music

IT has seemed to me at times that Oscar Hammerstein was gifted with almost prophetic vision. He it was who imagined the glory of Times (erstwhile Longacre) Square. Theatre after theatre he fashioned in what was then a barren district — and presently the crowds and the hotels came. He foresaw that French opera, given in the French manner, would be successful again in New York, and he upset the calculations of all the wiseacres by making money even with *Pelléas et Mélisande,* that esoteric collaboration of Belgian and French art, which in the latter part of the season of 1907–8 attained a record of seven performances at the Manhattan Opera House, all to audiences as vast and as devoted as those which attend the sacred festivals of *Parsifal* at Bayreuth. And he had announced for presentation during the season of 1908–9 (and again the following season) a Spanish opera called *Dolores.* If he had carried out his intention (why it was abandoned I have never learned; the scenery and costumes were ready) he would have had another honour thrust upon him, that of having been beforehand in the production of modern Spanish opera in New York, an honour which, in

the circumstances, must go to Mr. Gatti-Casazza. (Strictly speaking, *Goyescas* was not the first Spanish opera to be given in New York, although it was the first to be produced at the Metropolitan Opera House. *Il Guarany*, by Antonio Carlos Gomez, a Portuguese born in Brazil, was performed by the "Milan Grand Opera Company" during a three weeks' season at the Star Theatre in the fall of 1884. An air from this opera is still in the répertoire of many sopranos. To go still farther back, two of Manuel Garcia's operas, sung of course in Italian, *l'Amante Astuto* and *La Figlia dell'Aria*, were performed at the Park Theatre in 1825 with Maria Garcia — later to become the celebrated Mme. Malibran — in the principal rôles. More recently an itinerant Italian opéra-bouffe company, which gravitated from the Park Theatre — not the same edifice that harboured Garcia's company! — to various playhouses on the Bowery, included three zarzuelas in its répertoire. One of these, the popular *La Gran Via*, was announced for performance, but my records are dumb on the subject and I am not certain that it was actually given. There are probably other instances.) Mr. Hammerstein had previously produced two operas *about* Spain when he opened his first Manhattan Opera House

on the site now occupied by Macy's Department Store with Moszkowski's *Boabdil,* quickly followed by Beethoven's *Fidelio.* The malagueña from *Boabdil* is still a favourite *morceau* with restaurant orchestras, and I believe I have heard the entire ballet suite performed by the Chicago Orchestra under the direction of Theodore Thomas. New York's real occupation by the Spaniards, however, occurred after the close of Mr. Hammerstein's brilliant seasons, although the earlier vogue of Carmencita, whose celebrated portrait by Sargent in the Luxembourg Gallery in Paris will long preserve her fame, the interest in the highly-coloured paintings by Sorolla and Zuloaga, many of which are still on exhibition in private and public galleries in New York, the success here achieved, in varying degrees, by such singing artists as Emilio de Gogorza, Andrea de Segurola, and Lucrezia Bori, the performances of the piano works of Albeniz, Turina, and Granados by such pianists as Ernest Schelling, George Copeland, and Leo Ornstein, and the amazing Spanish dances of Anna Pavlowa (who in attempting them was but following in the footsteps of her great predecessors of the nineteenth century, Fanny Elssler and Taglioni), all fanned the flames.

The winter of 1915–16 beheld the Spanish blaze. Enrique Granados, one of the most distinguished of contemporary Spanish pianists and composers, a man who took a keen interest in the survival, and artistic use, of national forms, came to this country to assist at the production of his opera *Goyescas*, sung in Spanish at the Metropolitan Opera House for the first time anywhere, and was also heard several times here in his interpretative capacity as a pianist; Pablo Casals, the Spanish 'cellist, gave frequent exhibitions of his finished art, as did Miguel Llobet, the guitar virtuoso; La Argentina (Señora Paz of South America) exposed her ideas, somewhat classicized, of Spanish dances; a Spanish soprano, Maria Barrientos, made her North American début and justified, in some measure, the extravagant reports which had been spread broadcast about her singing; and finally the decree of Paris (still valid in spite of Paul Poiret's reported absence in the trenches) led all our womenfolk into the wearing of Spanish garments, the hip-hoops of the Velasquez period, the lace flounces of Goya's Duchess of Alba, and the mantillas, the combs, and the *accroche-coeurs* of Spain, Spain, Spain. . . . In addition one must mention Mme. Farrar's brilliant success, deserved in some degree, as Carmen, both

in Bizet's opera and in a moving picture drama; Miss Theda Bara's film appearance in the same part, made with more atmospheric suggestion than Mme. Farrar's, even if less effective as an interpretation of the moods of the Spanish cigarette girl; Mr. Charles Chaplin's eccentric burlesque of the same play; the continued presence in New York of Andrea de Segurola as an opera and concert singer; Maria Gay, who gave some performances in *Carmen* and other operas; and Lucrezia Bori, although she was unable to sing during the entire season owing to the unfortunate result of an operation on her vocal cords; in Chicago, Miss Supervia appeared at the opera and Mme. Koutznezoff, the Russian, danced Spanish dances; and at the New York Winter Garden Isabel Rodriguez appeared in Spanish dances which quite transcended the surroundings and made that stage as atmospheric, for the few brief moments in which it was occupied by her really entrancing beauty, as a *maison de danse* in Seville. The tango, too, in somewhat modified form, continued to interest "ballroom dancers," danced to music provided in many instances by Señor Valverde, an indefatigable producer of popular tunes, some of which have a certain value as music owing to their close allegiance to the folk-dances and songs of

Spain. In the art-world there was a noticeable revival of interest in Goya and El Greco.

But if Mr. Gatti-Casazza, with the best intentions in the world, should desire to take advantage of any of this *réclame* by producing a series of Spanish operas at the Metropolitan Opera House — say four or five more — he would find himself in difficulty. Where are they? Several of the operas of Isaac Albeniz have been performed in London, and in Brussels at the Théâtre de la Monnaie, but would they be liked here? There is Felipe Pedrell's monumental work, the trilogy, *Los Pireneos*, called by Edouard Lopez-Chavarri " the most important work for the theatre written in Spain "; and there is the aforementioned *Dolores*. For the rest, one would have to search about among the zarzuelas; and would the Metropolitan Opera House be a suitable place for the production of this form of opera? It is doubtful, indeed, if the zarzuela could take root in any theatre in New York.

The truth is that in Spain Italian and German operas are much more popular than Spanish, the zarzuela always excepted; and at Señor Arbós's series of concerts at the Royal Opera in Madrid one hears more Bach and Beethoven than Albeniz and Pedrell. There is a growing interest

in music in Spain and there are indications that some day her composers may again take an important place with the musicians of other nationalities, a place they proudly held in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. However, no longer ago than 1894, we find Louis Lombard writing in his "Observations of a Musician" that harmony was not taught at the Conservatory of Malaga, and that at the closing exercises of the Conservatory of Barcelona he had heard a four-hand arrangement of the *Tannhäuser* march performed on ten pianos by forty hands! Havelock Ellis ("The Soul of Spain," 1909) affirms that a concert in Spain sets the audience to chattering. They have a savage love of noise, the Spanish, he says, which incites them to conversation. Albert Lavignac, in "Music and Musicians" (William Marchant's translation), says, "We have left in the shade the Spanish school, which to say truth does not exist." But if one reads what Lavignac has to say about Moussorgsky, one is likely to give little credence to such extravagant generalities as the one just quoted. The Moussorgsky paragraph is a gem, and I am only too glad to insert it here for the sake of those who have not seen it: "A charming and fruitful melodist, who makes up for a lack of

skill in harmonization by a daring, which is sometimes of doubtful taste; has produced songs, piano music in small amount, and an opera, *Boris Godunow*." In the report of the proceedings of the thirty-fourth session of the London Musical Association (1907–8) Dr. Thomas Lea Southgate is quoted as complaining to Sir George Grove because under "Schools of Composition" in the old edition of Grove's Dictionary the Spanish School was dismissed in twenty lines. Sir George, he says, replied, "Well, I gave it to Rockstro because nobody knows anything about Spanish music." — The bibliography of modern Spanish music is indeed indescribably meagre, although a good deal has been written in and out of Spain about the early religious composers of the Iberian peninsula.

These matters will be discussed in due course. In the meantime it has afforded me some amusement to put together a list (which may be of interest to both the casual reader and the student of music) of compositions suggested by Spain to composers of other nationalities. (This list is by no means complete. I have not attempted to include in it works which are not more or less familiar to the public of the present day; without boundaries it could easily be extended into

a small volume.) The répertoire of the concert room and the opera house is streaked through and through with Spanish atmosphere and, on the whole, I should say, the best Spanish music has not been written by Spaniards, although most of it, like the best music written in Spain, is based primarily on the rhythm of folk-tunes, dances and songs. Of orchestral pieces I think I must put at the head of the list Chabrier's rhapsody, *España*, as colourful and rhythmic a combination of tone as the auditor of a symphony concert is often bidden to hear. It depends for its melody and rhythm on two Spanish dances, the jota, fast and fiery, and the malagueña, slow and sensuous. These are true Spanish tunes; Chabrier, according to report, invented only the rude theme given to the trombones. The piece was originally written for piano, and after Chabrier's death was transformed (with other music by the same composer) into a ballet, *España*, performed at the Paris Opera, 1911. Waldteufel based one of his most popular waltzes on the theme of this rhapsody. Chabrier's *Habanera* for the pianoforte (1885) was his last musical reminiscence of his journey to Spain. It is French composers generally who have achieved better effects with Spanish atmosphere than men of other nations,

and next to Chabrier's music I should put Debussy's *Iberia*, the second of his *Images* (1910). It contains three movements designated respectively as "In the streets and roads," "The perfumes of the night," and "The morning of a fête-day." It is indeed rather the smell and the look of Spain than the rhythm that this music gives us, entirely impressionistic that it is, but rhythm is not lacking, and such characteristic instruments as castanets, tambourines, and xylophones are required by the score. "Perfumes of the night" comes as near to suggesting odours to the nostrils as any music can — and not all of them are pleasant odours. There is Rimsky-Korsakow's *Capriccio Espagnole*, with its *alborado* or lusty morning serenade, its long series of cadenzas (as cleverly written as those of *Scheherazade* to display the virtuosity of individual players in the orchestra; it is noteworthy that this work is dedicated to the sixty-seven musicians of the band at the Imperial Opera House of Petrograd and all of their names are mentioned on the score) to suggest the vacillating music of a gipsy encampment, and finally the wild fandango of the Asturias with which the work comes to a brilliant conclusion. Engelbert Humperdinck taught the theory of music in the Conserva-

tory of Barcelona for two years (1885–6), and one of the results was his *Maurische Rhapsodie* in three parts (1898–9), still occasionally performed by our orchestras. Lalo wrote his *Symphonie Espagnole* for violin and orchestra for the great Spanish virtuoso, Pablo de Sarasate, but all our violinists delight to perform it (although usually shorn of a movement or two). Glinka wrote a *Jota Aragonese* and *A Night in Madrid;* he gave a Spanish theme to Balakirew which the latter utilized in his *Overture on a theme of a Spanish March.* Liszt wrote a *Spanish Rhapsody* for pianoforte (arranged as a concert piece for piano and orchestra by Busoni) in which he used the jota of Aragon as a theme for variations. Rubinstein's *Toreador and Andalusian* and Moszkowski's *Spanish Dances* (for four hands) are known to all amateur pianists as Hugo Wolf's *Spanisches Liederbuch* and Robert Schumann's *Spanisches Liederspiel,* set to F. Giebel's translations of popular Spanish ballads, are known to all singers. I have heard a song of Saint-Saëns, *Guitares et Mandolines,* charmingly sung by Greta Torpadie, in which the instruments of the title, under the subtle fingers of that masterly accompanist, Coenraad V. Bos, were cleverly imitated. And Debussy's *Mandoline* and

Delibes's *Les Filles de Cadiz* (which in this country belongs both to Emma Calvé and Olive Fremstad) spring instantly to mind. Ravel's *Rapsodie Espagnole* is as Spanish as music could be. The Boston Symphony men have played it during the season just past. Ravel based the habanera section of his *Rapsodie* on one of his piano pieces. But Richard Strauss's two tone-poems on Spanish subjects, *Don Juan* and *Don Quixote*, have not a note of Spanish colouring, so far as I can remember, from beginning to end. Svendsen's symphonic poem, *Zorahayda*, based on a passage in Washington Irving's "Alhambra," is Spanish in theme and may be added to this list together with Waldteufel's *Estudiantina* waltzes.

Four modern operas stand out as Spanish in subject and atmosphere. I would put at the top of the list Zandonai's *Conchita;* the Italian composer has caught on his musical palette and transferred to his tonal canvas a deal of the lazy restless colour of the Iberian peninsula in this little master-work. The feeling of the streets and patios is admirably caught. My friend, Pitts Sanborn, said of it, after its solitary performance at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York by the Chicago Opera Company, "There is musical

atmosphere of a rare and penetrating kind; there is colour used with the discretion of a master; there are intoxicating rhythms, and above the orchestra the voices are heard in a truthful musical speech. . . . Ever since *Carmen* it has been so easy to write Spanish music and achieve supremely the banal. Here there is as little of the Spanish of convention as in Debussy's *Iberia*, but there is Spain." This opera, based on Pierre Louys's sadic novel, "La Femme et le Pantin," owed some of its extraordinary impression of vitality to the vivid performance given of the title-rôle by Tarquinia Tarquini. Raoul Laparra, born in Bordeaux, but who has travelled much in Spain, has written two Spanish operas, *La Habanera* and *La Jota*, both named after popular Spanish dances and both produced at the Opéra-Comique in Paris. I have heard *La Habanera* there and found the composer's use of the dance as a pivot of a tragedy very convincing. Nor shall I forget the first act-close, in which a young man, seated on a wall facing the window of a house where a most bloody murder has been committed, sings a wild Spanish ditty, accompanying himself on the guitar, crossing and recrossing his legs in complete abandonment to the rhythm, while in the house rises the wild treble cry of a frightened

child. I have not heard *La Jota*, nor have I seen the score. I do not find Emile Vuillermoz enthusiastic in his review ("S. I. M.," May 15, 1911): "Une danse transforme le premier acte en un kaléidoscope frénétique et le combat dans l'église doit donner, au second, dans l'intention de l'auteur 'une sensation à pic, un peu comme celle d'un puits où grouillerait la besogne monstreuse de larves humaines.' A vrai dire ces deux tableaux de cinématographe papillotant, corsés de cris, de hurlements et d'un nombre incalculable de coups de feu constituent pour le spectateur une épreuve physiquement douloureuse, une hallucination confuse et inquiétante, un cauchemar assourdissant qui le conduisent irrésistiblement à l'hébétude et à la migraine. Dans tout cet enfer que devient la musique?" Perhaps opera-goers in general are not looking for thrills of this order; the fact remains that *La Jota* has had a modest career when compared with *La Habanera*, which has even been performed in Boston. *Carmen* is essentially a French opera; the leading emotions of the characters are expressed in an idiom as French as that of Gounod; yet the dances and entr'actes are Spanish in colour. The story of Carmen's entrance song is worth retelling in Mr. Philip Hale's words ("Boston Symphony Orchestra Programme

Notes"; 1914–15, P. 287): "Mme. Galli-Marié disliked her entrance air, which was in 6-8 time with a chorus. She wished something more audacious, a song in which she could bring into play the whole battery of her *perversités artistiques*, to borrow Charles Pigot's phrase: 'caressing tones and smiles, voluptuous inflections, killing glances, disturbing gestures.' During the rehearsals Bizet made a dozen versions. The singer was satisfied only with the thirteenth, the now familiar Habanera, based on an old Spanish tune that had been used by Sebastian Yradier. This brought Bizet into trouble, for Yradier's publisher, Heugel, demanded that the indebtedness should be acknowledged in Bizet's score. Yradier made no complaint, but to avoid a lawsuit or a scandal, Bizet gave consent, and on the first page of the Habanera in the French edition of *Carmen* this line is engraved: 'Imitated from a Spanish song, the property of the publishers of *Le Ménestrel*.'"

There are other operas the scenes of which are laid in Spain. Some of them make an attempt at Spanish colouring, more do not. Massenet wrote no less than five operas on Spanish subjects, *Le Cid*, *Cherubin*, *Don César de Bazan*, *La Navarraise* and *Don Quichotte* (Cervantes's novel has

frequently lured the composers of lyric dramas with its story; Clément et Larousse give a long list of *Don Quixote* operas, but they do not include one by Manuel Garcia, which is mentioned in John Towers's compilation, "Dictionary-Catalogue of Operas." However, not a single one of these lyric dramas has held its place on the stage). The Spanish dances in *Le Cid* are frequently performed, although the opera is not. The most famous of the set is called simply *Aragonaise;* it is not a jota. *Pleurez, mes yeux*, the principal air of the piece, can scarcely be called Spanish. There is a delightful suggestion of the jota in *La Navarraise.* In *Don Quichotte* la belle Dulcinée sings one of her airs to her own guitar strummings, and much was made of the fact, before the original production at Monte Carlo, of Mme. Lucy Arbell's lessons on that instrument. Mary Garden, who had learned to dance for *Salome*, took no guitar lessons for *Don Quichotte.* But is not the guitar an anachronism in this opera? In a pamphlet by Señor Cecilio de Roda, issued during the celebration of the tercentenary of the publication of Cervantes's romance, taking as its subject the musical references in the work, I find, "The harp was the aristocratic instrument most favoured by women and it would appear to be regarded in *Don Quixote* as

the feminine instrument par excellence." Was the guitar as we know it in existence at that epoch? I think the *vihuela* was the guitar of the period. . . . Maurice Ravel wrote a Spanish opera, *l'Heure Espagnole* (one act, performed at the Paris Opéra-Comique, 1911). Octave Séré ("Musiciens français d'Aujourd'hui") says of it: "Les principaux traits de son caractère et l'influence du sol natal s'y combinent étrangement. De l'alliance de la mer et du Pays Basque (Ravel was born in the Basses-Pyrénées, near the sea) est née une musique à la fois fluide et nerveusement rythmée, mobile, chatoyante, amie du pittoresque et dont le trait net et précis est plus incisif que profond." Hugo Wolf's opera *Der Corregidor* is founded on the novel, "Il Sombrero de tres Picos," of the Spanish writer, Pedro de Alarcon (1833–91). His unfinished opera *Manuel Venegas* also has a Spanish subject, suggested by Alarcon's "El Nino de la Bola." Other Spanish operas are Beethoven's *Fidelio*, Balfe's *The Rose of Castille*, Verdi's *Ernani* and *Il Trovatore*, Rossini's *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, Mozart's *Don Giovanni* and *Le Nozze di Figaro*, Weber's *Preciosa* (really a play with incidental music), Dargomijsky's *The Stone Guest* (Pushkin's version of the Don Juan story. This opera, by the way, was one of the many retouched

and completed by Rimsky-Korsakow), Reznicek's *Donna Diana* — and Wagner's *Parsifal!* The American composer John Knowles Paine's opera *Azara*, dealing with a Moorish subject, has, I think, never been performed.

II

The early religious composers of Spain deserve a niche all to themselves, be it ever so tiny, as in the present instance. There is, to be sure, some doubt as to whether their inspiration was entirely peninsular, or whether some of it was wafted from Flanders, and the rest gleaned in Rome, for in their service to the church most of them migrated to Italy and did their best work there. It is not the purpose of the present chronicler to devote much space to these early men, or to discuss in detail their music. There are no books in English devoted to a study of Spanish music, and few in any language, but what few exist take good care to relate at considerable length (some of them with frequent musical quotation) the state of music in Spain in the sixteenth, seventeenth, and eighteenth centuries, the golden period. To the reader who may wish to pursue this phase of our subject I

offer a small bibliography. There is first of all A. Soubies's two volumes, "Histoire de la Musique d'Espagne," published in 1889. The second volume takes us through the eighteenth century. The religious and early secular composers are catalogued in these volumes, but there is little attempt at detail, and he is a happy composer who is awarded an entire page. Soubies does not find occasion to pause for more than a paragraph on most of his subjects. Occasionally, however, he lightens the plodding progress of the reader, as when he quotes Father Bermudo's "Declaracion de Instrumentos" (1548; the 1555 edition is in the Library of Congress at Washington): "There are three kinds of instruments in music. The first are called natural; these are men, of whom the song is called *musical harmony*. Others are artificial and are played by the touch — such as the harp, the *vihuela* (the ancient guitar, which resembles the lute), and others like them; the music of these is called *artificial* or rhythmic. The third species is pneumatique and includes instruments such as the flute, the douçaine (a species of oboe), and the organ." There may be some to dispute this ingenious and highly original classification. The best known, and perhaps the most useful (because it is easily accessible) history of

Spanish music is that written by Mariano Soriano Fuertes, in four volumes: "Historia de la Música Española desde la venida de los Fenicios hasta el año de 1850"; published in Barcelona and Madrid in 1855. There is further the "Diccionario Tecnico, Historico, y Biografico de la Música," by Jose Parada y Barreto (Madrid, 1867). This, of course, is a general work on music, but Spain gets her full due. For example, a page and a half is devoted to Beethoven, and nine pages to Eslava. It is to this latter composer to whom we must turn for the most complete and important work on Spanish church music: "Lira Sacro-Hispana" (Madrid, 1869), in ten volumes, with voluminous extracts from the composers' works. This collection of Spanish church music from the sixteenth century through the eighteenth, with biographical notices of the composers is out of print and rare (there is a copy in the Congressional Library at Washington). As a complement to it I may mention Felipe Pedrell's "Hispaniae Schola Música Sacra," begun in 1894, which has already reached the proportions of Eslava's work. Pedrell, who was the master of Enrique Granados, has also issued a fine edition of the music of Victoria.

The Spanish composers had their full share in the prccess of crystallizing music into forms of

permanent beauty during the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. Rockstro asserts that during the early part of the sixteenth century nearly all the best composers for the great Roman choirs were Spaniards. But their greatest achievement was the foundation of the school of which Palestrina was the crown. On the music of their own country their influence is less perceptible. I think the name of Cristofero Morales (1512–53) is the first important name in the history of Spanish music. He preceded Palestrina in Rome and some of his masses and motets are still sung in the Papal chapel there (and in other Roman Catholic edifices and by choral societies). Francesco Guerrero (1528–99; these dates are approximate) was a pupil of Morales. He wrote settings of the Passion choruses according to St. Matthew and St. John and numerous masses and motets. Tomas Luis de Victoria is, of course, the greatest figure in Spanish music, and next to Palestrina (with whom he worked contemporaneously) the greatest figure in sixteenth century music. Soubies writes: "One might say that on his musical palette he has entirely at his disposition, in some sort, the glowing colour of Zurburan, the realistic and transparent tones of Velasquez, the ideal shades of Juan de Juares and Murillo. His mys-

ticism is that of Santa Theresa and San Juan de la Cruz." The music of Victoria is still very much alive and may be heard even in New York, occasionally, through the medium of the Musical Art Society. Whether it is performed in churches in America or not I do not know; the Roman choirs still sing it. . . .

The list might be extended indefinitely . . . but the great names I have given. There are Cabezon, whom Pedrell calls the "Spanish Bach," Navarro, Caseda, Comes, Ribera, Castillo, Lobo, Duron, Romero, Juarez. On the whole I think these composers had more influence on Rome — the Spanish nature is more reverent than the Italian — than on Spain. The modern Spanish composers have learned more from the folk-song and dance than they have from the church composers. However, there are voices which dissent from this opinion. G. Tebaldini ("Rivista Musicale," Vol. IV, Pp. 267 and 494) says that Pedrell in his studies learned much which he turned to account in the choral writing of his operas. And Felipe Pedrell himself asserts that there is an unbroken chain between the religious composers of the sixteenth century and the theatrical composers of the seventeenth. We may follow him thus far without believing that the theatrical composers of the sev-

enteenth century had too great an influence on the secular composers of the present day.

III

All the world dances in Spain, at least it would seem so, in reading over the books of the Marco Polos who have made voyages of discovery on the Iberian peninsula. Guitars seem to be as common there as pea-shooters in New England, and strumming seems to set the feet a-tapping and voices a-singing, what, they care not. (Havelock Ellis says: "It is not always agreeable to the Spaniard to find that dancing is regarded by the foreigner as a peculiar and important Spanish institution. Even Valera, with his wide culture, could not escape this feeling; in a review of a book about Spain by an American author entitled 'The Land of the Castanet'— a book which he recognized as full of appreciation for Spain — Valera resented the title. It is, he says, as though a book about the United States should be called 'The Land of Bacon.'") Oriental colour is streaked through and through the melodies and harmonies, many of which betray their Arabian origin; others are *flamenco*, or gipsy. The dances, almost invariably accompanied by song, are generally in 3-4

time or its variants such as 6-8 or 3-8; the tango, of course, is in 2-4. But the dancers evolve the most elaborate inter-rhythms out of these simple measures, creating thereby a complexity of effect which defies any comprehensible notation on paper. As it is on this *fioriture*, if I may be permitted to use the word in this connection, of the dancer that the sophisticated composer bases some of his most natural and national effects, I shall linger on the subject. La Argentina has re-arranged many of the Spanish dances for purposes of the concert stage, but in her translation she has retained in a large measure this interesting complication of rhythm, marking the irregularity of the beat, now with a singularly complicated detonation of heel-tapping, now with a sudden bend of a knee, now with the subtle quiver of an eyelash, now with a shower of castanet sparks (an instrument which requires a hard tutelage for its complete mastery; Richard Ford tells us that even the children in the streets of Spain rap shells together, to become self-taught artists in the use of it). Chabrier, in his visit to Spain with his wife in 1882, attempted to note down some of these rhythmic variations achieved by the dancers while the musicians strummed their guitars, and he was partially successful. But all in all he only suc-

ceeded in giving in a single measure each variation; he did not attempt to weave them into the intricate pattern which the Spanish women contrive to make of them.

There is a singular similarity to be observed between this heel-tapping and the complicated drum-tapping of the African negroes of certain tribes. In his book "Afro-American Folksongs" H. E. Krehbiel thus describes the musical accompaniment of the dances in the Dahoman Village at the World's Columbian Exposition in Chicago: "These dances were accompanied by choral song and the rhythmical and harmonious beating of drums and bells, the song being in unison. The harmony was a tonic major triad broken up rhythmically in a most intricate and amazingly ingenious manner. The instruments were tuned with excellent justness. The fundamental tone came from a drum made of a hollowed log about three feet long with a single head, played by one who seemed to be the leader of the band, though there was no giving of signals. This drum was beaten with the palms of the hands. A variety of smaller drums, some with one, some with two heads, were beaten variously with sticks and fingers. The bells, four in number, were of iron and were held mouth upward and struck with sticks.

The players showed the most remarkable rhythmical sense and skill that ever came under my notice. Berlioz in his supremest effort with his army of drummers produced nothing to compare in artistic interest with the harmonious drumming of these savages. The fundamental effect was a combination of double and triple time, the former kept by the singers, the latter by the drummers, but it is impossible to convey the idea of the wealth of detail achieved by the drummers by means of exchange of the rhythms, syncopation of both simultaneously, and dynamic devices. Only by making a score of the music could this have been done. I attempted to make such a score by enlisting the help of the late John C. Filmore, experienced in Indian music, but we were thwarted by the players who, evidently divining our purpose when we took out our notebooks, mischievously changed their manner of playing as soon as we touched pencil to paper."

The resemblance between negro and Spanish music is very noticeable. Mr. Krehbiel says that in South America Spanish melody has been imposed on negro rhythm. In the dances of the people of Spain, as Chabrier points out, the melody is often practically nil; the effect is rhythmic (an effect which is emphasized by the obvious harmonic

and melodic limitations of the guitar, which invariably accompanies all singers and dancers). If there were a melody or if the guitarists played well (which they usually do not) one could not distinguish its contours what with the cries of Olè! and the heel-beats of the performers. Spanish melodies, indeed, are often scraps of tunes, like the African negro melodies. The habanera is a true African dance, taken to Spain by way of Cuba, as Albert Friedenthal points out in his book, "Musik, Tanz, und Dichtung bei den Kreolen Amerikas." Whoever was responsible, Arab, negro, or Moor (Havelock Ellis says that the dances of Spain are closely allied with the ancient dances of Greece and Egypt), the Spanish dances betray their oriental origin in their complexity of rhythm (a complexity not at all obvious on the printed page, as so much of it depends on dancer, guitarist, singer, and even public!), and the *fioriture* which decorate their melody when melody occurs. While Spanish religious music is perhaps not distinctively Spanish, the dances invariably display marked national characteristics; it is on these, then (some in greater, some in less degree), that the composers in and out of Spain have built their most atmospheric inspirations, their best pictures of popular life in the Iberian peninsula. A good

deal of the interest of this music is due to the important part the guitar plays in its construction; the modulations are often contrary to all rules of harmony and (yet, some would say) the music seems to be effervescent with variety and fire. Of the guitarists Richard Ford ("Gatherings from Spain") says: "The performers seldom are very scientific musicians; they content themselves with striking the chords, sweeping the whole hand over the strings, or flourishing, and tapping the board with the thumb, at which they are very expert. Occasionally in the towns there is some one who has attained more power over this ungrateful instrument; but the attempt is a failure. The guitar responds coldly to Italian words and elaborate melody, which never come home to Spanish ears or hearts." (An exception must be made in the case of Miguel Llobet. I first heard him play at Pitts Sanborn's concert at the Punch and Judy Theatre (April 17, 1916) for the benefit of Hospital 28 in Bourges, France, and he made a deep impression on me. In one of his numbers, the *Spanish Fantasy* of Farrega, he astounded and thrilled me. He seemed at all times to exceed the capacity of his instrument, obtaining a variety of colour which was truly amazing. In this particular number he not only plucked the keyboard

but the fingerboard as well, in intricate and rapid *tempo;* seemingly two different kinds of instruments were playing. But at all times he variated his tone; sometimes he made the instrument sound almost as though it had been played by wind and not plucked. Especially did I note a suggestion of the bagpipe. A true artist. None of the music, the fantasy mentioned, a serenade of Albeniz, and a Menuet of Tor, was particularly interesting, although the Fantasia contained some fascinating references to folk-dance tunes. There is nothing sensational about Llobet, a quiet prim sort of man; he sits quietly in his chair and makes music. It might be a harp or a 'cello — no striving for personal effect.)

The Spanish dances are infinite in number and for centuries back they seem to form part and parcel of Spanish life. Discussion as to how they are danced is a feature of the descriptions. No two authors agree, it would seem; to a mere annotator the fact is evident that they are danced differently on different occasions. It is obvious that they are danced differently in different provinces. The Spaniards, as Richard Ford points out, are not too willing to give information to strangers, frequently because they themselves lack the knowledge. Their statements are often mis-

leading, sometimes intentionally so. They do not understand the historical temperament. Until recently many of the art treasures and archives of the peninsula were but poorly kept. Those who lived in the shadow of the Alhambra admired only its shade. It may be imagined that there has been even less interest displayed in recording the folk-dances. "Dancing in Spain is now a matter which few know anything about," writes Havelock Ellis, "because every one takes it for granted that he knows all about it; and any question on the subject receives a very ready answer which is usually of questionable correctness." Of the music of the dances we have many records, and that they are generally in 3-4 time or its variants we may be certain. As to whether they are danced by two women, a woman and a man, or a woman alone, the authorities do not always agree. The confusion is added to by the oracular attitude of the scribes. It seems quite certain to me that this procedure varies. That the animated picture almost invariably possesses great fascination there are only too many witnesses to prove. I myself can testify to the marvel of some of them, set to be sure in strange frames, the Feria in Paris, for example; but even without the surroundings, which Spanish dances demand, the diablerie, the shiver-

ing intensity of these fleshly women, always wound tight with such shawls as only the mistresses of kings might wear in other countries, have drawn taut the *real thrill.* It is dancing which enlists the co-operation not only of the feet and legs, but of the arms and, in fact, the entire body.

The smart world in Spain to-day dances much as the smart world does anywhere else, although it does not, I am told, hold a brief for our tango, which Mr. Krehbiel suggests is a corruption of the original African habanera. But in older days many of the dances, such as the pavana, the sarabande, and the gallarda, were danced at the court and were in favour with the nobility. (Although presumably of Italian origin, the pavana and gallarda were more popular in Spain than in Rome. Fuertes says that the sarabande was invented in the middle of the sixteenth century by a dancer called Zarabanda who was a native of either Seville or Guayaquil.) The pavana, an ancient dance of grave and stately measure, was much in vogue in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. An explanation of its name is that the figures executed by the dancers bore a resemblance to the semicircular wheel-like spreading of the tail of a peacock. The gallarda (French, gaillard) was usually danced as a relief to the pavana (and indeed

often follows it in the dance-suites of the classical composers in which these forms all figure). The jacara, or more properly xacara, of the sixteenth century, was danced in accompaniment to a romantic, swashbuckling ditty. The Spanish folias were a set of dances danced to a simple tune treated in a variety of styles with very free accompaniment of castanets and bursts of song. Corelli in Rome in 1700 published twenty-four variations in this form, which have been played in our day by Fritz Kreisler and other violinists.

The names of the modern Spanish dances are often confused in the descriptions offered by observing travellers, for the reasons already noted. Hundreds of these descriptions exist, and it is difficult to choose the most telling of them. Gertrude Stein, who has spent the last two years in Spain, has noted the rhythm of several of these dances by the mingling of her original use of words with the ingratiating medium of *vers libre*. She has succeeded, I think, better than some musicians in suggesting the intricacies of the rhythm. I should like to transcribe one of these attempts here, but that I have not the right to do as I have only seen them in manuscript; they have not yet appeared in print. These pieces are in a sense the thing itself — I shall have to fall back on descriptions of

the thing. The tirana, a dance common to the province of Andalusia, is accompanied by song. It has a decided rhythm, affording opportunities for grace and gesture, the women toying with their aprons, the men flourishing hats and handkerchiefs. The polo, or olè, is now a gipsy dance. Mr. Ellis asserts that it is a corruption of the sarabande! He goes on to say, "The so-called gipsy dances of Spain are Spanish dances which the Spaniards are tending to relinquish but which the gipsies have taken up with energy and skill." (This theory might be warmly contested.) The bolero, a comparatively modern dance, came to Spain through Italy. Mr. Philip Hale points out the fact that the bolero and the cachucha (which, by the way, one seldom hears of nowadays) were the popular Spanish dances when Mesdames Faviani and Dolores Tesrai, and their followers, Mlle. Noblet and Fanny Elssler, visited Paris. Fanny Elssler indeed is most frequently seen pictured in Spanish costume, and the cachucha was danced by her as often, I fancy, as Mme. Pavlowa dances *Le Cygne* of Saint-Saëns. Anna de Camargo, who acquired great fame as a dancer in France in the early eighteenth century, was born in Brussels but was of Spanish descent. She relied, however, on the Italian classic style for her success rather than

on national Spanish dances. The seguidilla is a gipsy dance which has the same rhythm as the bolero but is more animated and stirring. Examples of these dances, and of the jota, fandango, and the sevillana, are to be met with in the compositions listed in the first section of this article, in the appendices of Soriano Fuertes's "History of Spanish Music," in Grove's Dictionary, in the numbers of "S. I. M." in which the letters of Emmanuel Chabrier occur, and in collections made by P. Lacome, published in Paris.

The jota is another dance in 3-4 time. Every province in Spain has its own jota, but the most famous variations are those of Aragon, Valencia, and Navarre. It is accompanied by the guitar, the *bandarria* (similar to the guitar), small drum, castanets, and triangle. Mr. Hale says that its origin in the twelfth century is attributed to a Moor named Alben Jot who fled from Valencia to Aragon. "The jota," he continues, "is danced not only at merrymakings but at certain religious festivals and even in watching the dead. One called the 'Natividad del Señor' (nativity of our Lord) is danced on Christmas eve in Aragon, and is accompanied by songs, and jotas are sung and danced at the crossroads, invoking the favour of

the Virgin, when the festival of Our Lady del Pilar is celebrated at Saragossa."

Havelock Ellis's description of the jota is worth reproducing: "The Aragonaise jota, the most important and typical dance outside Andalusia, is danced by a man and a woman, and is a kind of combat between them; most of the time they are facing each other, both using castanets and advancing and retreating in an apparently aggressive manner, the arms alternately slightly raised and lowered, and the legs, with a seeming attempt to trip the partner, kicking out alternately somewhat sidewise, as the body is rapidly supported first on one side and then on the other. It is a monotonous dance, with immense rapidity and vivacity in its monotony, but it has not the deliberate grace and fascination, the happy audacities of Andalusian dancing. There is, indeed, no faintest suggestion of voluptuousness in it, but it may rather be said, in the words of a modern poet, Salvador Rueda, to have in it 'the sound of helmets and plumes and lances and banners, the roaring of cannon, the neighing of horses, the shock of swords.'"

Chabrier, in his astounding and amusing letters from Spain, gives us vivid pictures and interesting

information. This one, written to his friend, Edouard Moullé, from Granada, November 4, 1882, appeared in "S. I. M." April 15, 1911 (I have omitted the musical illustrations, which, however, possess great value for the student): "In a month I must leave adorable Spain . . . and say good-bye to the Spaniards,— because, I say this only to you, they are very nice, the little girls! I have not seen a really ugly woman since I have been in Andalusia: I do not speak of the feet, they are so small that I have never seen them; the hands are tiny and well-kept and the arms of an exquisite contour; I speak only of what one can see, but they show a good deal; add the arabesques, the side-curls, and other ingenuities of the coiffure, the inevitable fan, the flower and the comb in the hair, placed well behind, the shawl of Chinese crêpe, with long fringe and embroidered in flowers, knotted around the figure, the arm bare, and the eye protected by eyelashes which are long enough to curl; the skin of dull white or orange colour, according to the race, all this smiling, gesticulating, dancing, drinking, and careless to the last degree. . . .

"That is the Andalusian.

"Every evening we go with Alice to the café-concerts where the malagueñas, the Soledas, the

Sapateados, and the Peteneras are sung; then the dances, absolutely Arab, to speak truth; if you could see them wriggle, unjoint their hips, contortion, I believe you would not try to get away! . . . At Malaga the dancing became so intense that I was compelled to take my wife away; it wasn't even amusing any more. I can't write about it, but I remember it and I will describe it to you.— I have no need to tell you that I have noted down many things; the tango, a kind of dance in which the women imitate the pitching of a ship (*le tangage du navire*) is the only dance in 2 time; all the others, all, are in 3-4 (Seville) or in 3-8 (Malaga and Cadiz); — in the North it is different, there is some music in 5-8, very curious. The 2-4 of the tango is always like the habanera; this is the picture: one or two women dance, two silly men play it doesn't matter what on their guitars, and five or six women howl, with excruciating voices and in triplet figures impossible to note down because they change the air — every instant a new scrap of tune. They howl a series of figurations with syllables, words, rising voices, clapping hands which strike the six quavers, emphasizing the third and the sixth, cries of Anda! Anda! La Salud! eso es la Maraquita! gracia, nationidad! Baila, la chiquilla! Anda! Anda! Consuelo! Olè, la

Lola, olè la Carmen! que gracia! que elegancia! all that to excite the young dancer. It is vertiginous — it is unspeakable!

"The Sevillana is another thing: it is in 3-4 time (and with castanets). . . . All this becomes extraordinarily alluring with two curls, a pair of castanets and a guitar. It is impossible to write down the malagueña. It is a melopœia, however, which has a form and which always ends on the dominant, to which the guitar furnishes 3-8 time, and the spectator (when there is one) seated beside the guitarist, holds a cane between his legs and beats the syncopated rhythm; the dancers themselves instinctively syncopate the measures in a thousand ways, striking with their heels an unbelievable number of rhythms. . . . It is all rhythm and dance: the airs scraped out by the guitarist have no value; besides, they cannot be heard on account of the cries of Anda! la chiquilla! que gracia! que elegancia! Anda! Olè! Olè! la chiquirritita! and the more the cries the more the dancer laughs with her mouth wide open, and turns her hips, and is mad with her body. . . ."

As it is on these dances that composers invariably base their Spanish music (not alone Albeniz, Chapí, Bretón, and Granados, but Chabrier,

Ravel, Laparra, and Bizet, as well) we may linger somewhat longer on their delights. The following compelling description is from Richard Ford's highly readable "Gatherings from Spain": "The dance which is closely analogous to the *Ghowasee* of the Egyptians, and the *Nautch* of the Hindoos, is called the *Olè* by Spaniards, the *Romalis* by their gipsies; the soul and essence of it consists in the expression of a certain sentiment, one not indeed of a very sentimental or correct character. The ladies, who seem to have no bones, resolve the problem of perpetual motion, their feet having comparatively a sinecure, as the whole person performs a pantomime, and trembles like an aspen leaf; the flexible form and Terpsichore figure of a young Andalusian girl — be she gipsy or not — is said, by the learned, to have been designed by nature as the fit frame for her voluptuous imagination.

"Be that as it may, the scholar and classical commentator will every moment quote Martial, etc., when he beholds the unchanged balancing of hands, raised as if to catch showers of roses, the tapping of the feet, and the serpentine quivering movements. A contagious excitement seizes the spectators, who, like Orientals, beat time with their hands in measured cadence, and at every

pause applaud with cries and clappings. The damsels, thus encouraged, continue in violent action until nature is all but exhausted; then aniseed brandy, wine, and *alpisteras* are handed about, and the fête, carried on to early dawn, often concludes in broken heads, which here are called 'gipsy's fare.' These dances appear, to a stranger from the chilly north, to be more marked by energy than by grace, nor have the legs less to do than the body, hips, and arms. The sight of this unchanged pastime of antiquity, which excites the Spaniard to frenzy, rather disgusts an English spectator, possibly from some national malorganization, for, as Molière says, 'l'Angleterre a produit des grands hommes dans les sciences et les beaux arts, mais pas un grand danseur — allez lire l'histoire.'" (A fact as true in our day as it was in Molière's.)

On certain days the sevillana is danced before the high altar of the cathedral at Seville. The Reverend Henry Cart de Lafontaine ("Proceedings of the Musical Association"; London, thirty-third session, 1906–7) gives the following account of it, quoting a "French author": "While Louis XIII was reigning over France, the Pope heard much talk of the Spanish dance called the 'Sevillana.' He wished to satisfy himself, by ac-

tual eye-witness, as to the character of this dance, and expressed his wish to a bishop of the diocese of Seville, who every year visited Rome. Evil tongues make the bishop responsible for the primary suggestion of the idea. Be that as it may, the bishop, on his return to Seville, had twelve youths well instructed in all the intricate measures of this Andalusian dance. He had to choose youths, for how could he present maidens to the horrified glance of the Holy Father? When his little troop was thoroughly schooled and perfected, he took the party to Rome, and the audience was arranged. The 'Sevillana' was danced in one of the rooms of the Vatican. The Pope warmly complimented the young executants, who were dressed in beautiful silk costumes of the period. The bishop humbly asked for permission to perform this dance at certain fêtes in the cathedral church at Seville, and further pleaded for a restriction of this privilege to that church alone. The Pope, hoist by his own petard, did not like to refuse, but granted the privilege with this restriction, that it should only last so long as the costumes of the dancers were wearable. Needless to say, these costumes are, therefore, objects of constant repair, but they are supposed to retain their identity even to this day. And this

is the reason why the twelve boys who dance the 'Sevillana' before the high altar in the cathedral on certain feast days are dressed in the costume belonging to the reign of Louis XIII."

This is a very pretty story, but it is not uncontradicted. . . . Has any statement been made about Spanish dancing or music which has been allowed to go uncontradicted? Look upon that picture and upon this: "As far as it is possible to ascertain from records," says Rhoda G. Edwards in the "Musical Standard," "this dance would seem always to have been in use in Seville cathedral; when the town was taken from the Moors in the thirteenth century it was undoubtedly an established custom and in 1428 we find the six boys recognized as an integral part of the chapter by Pope Eugenius IV. The dance is known as the (*sic*) 'Los Scises,' or dance of the six boys who, with four others, dance it before the high altar at Benediction on the three evenings before Lent and in the octaves of Corpus Christi and La Purissima (the conception of Our Lady). The dress of the boys is most picturesque, page costumes of the time of Philip III being worn, blue for La Purissima and red satin doublets slashed with blue for the other occasion; white hats with blue and white feathers are also worn whilst

dancing. The dance is usually of twenty-five minutes' duration and in form seems quite unique, not resembling any of the other Spanish dance-forms, or in fact those of any other country. The boys accompany the symphony on castanets and sing a hymn in two parts whilst dancing."

From another author we learn that religious dancing is to be seen elsewhere in Spain than at Seville cathedral. At one time, it is said to have been common. The pilgrims to the shrine of the Virgin at Montserrat were wont to dance, and dancing took place in the churches of Valencia, Toledo, and Jurez. Religious dancing continued to be common, especially in Catalonia up to the seventeenth century. An account of the dance in the Seville cathedral may be found in "Los Españoles Pintados por si Mismos" (pages 287–91).

This very incomplete and rambling record of Spanish dancing should include some mention of the fandango. The origin of the word is obscure, but the dance is obviously one of the gayest and wildest of the Spanish dances. Like the malagueña it is in 3-8 time, but it is quite different in spirit from that sensuous form of terpsichorean enjoyment. La Argentina informs me that "fandango" in Spanish suggests very much

what "bachanale" does in English or French. It is a very old dance, and may be a survival of a Moorish dance, as Desrat suggests. Mr. Philip Hale found the following account of it somewhere:

"Like an electric shock, the notes of the fandango animate all hearts. Men and women, young and old, acknowledge the power of this air over the ears and soul of every Spaniard. The young men spring to their places, rattling castanets, or imitating their sound by snapping their fingers. The girls are remarkable for the willowy languor and lightness of their movements, the voluptuousness of their attitudes — beating the exactest time with tapping heels. Partners tease and entreat and pursue each other by turns. Suddenly the music stops, and each dancer shows his skill by remaining absolutely motionless, bounding again in the full life of the fandango as the orchestra strikes up. The sound of the guitar, the violin, the rapid tic-tac of heels (*taconeos*), the crack of fingers and castanets, the supple swaying of the dancers, fill the spectators with ecstasy.

"The music whirls along in a rapid triple time. Spangles glitter; the sharp clank of ivory and ebony castanets beats out the cadence of strange, throbbing, deafening notes — assonances un-

known to music, but curiously characteristic, effective, and intoxicating. Amidst the rustle of silks, smiles gleam over white teeth, dark eyes sparkle and droop, and flash up again in flame. All is flutter and glitter, grace and animation — quivering, sonorous, passionate, seductive. *Olè! Olè!* Faces beam and burn. *Olè! Olè!*

"The bolero intoxicates, the fandango inflames."

It can be well understood that the study of Spanish dancing and its music must be carried on in Spain. Mr. Ellis tells us why: "Another characteristic of Spanish dancing, and especially of the most typical kind called flamenco, lies in its accompaniments, and particularly in the fact that under proper conditions all the spectators are themselves performers. . . . Thus it is that at the end of a dance an absolute silence often falls, with no sound of applause: the relation of performers and public has ceased to exist. . . . The finest Spanish dancing is at once killed or degraded by the presence of an indifferent or unsympathetic public, and that is probably why it cannot be transplanted, but remains local."

At the end of a dance an absolute silence often falls. . . . I am again in an underground café in Amsterdam. It is the eve of the Queen's birth-

day, and the Dutch are celebrating. The low, smoke-wreathed room is crowded with students, soldiers, and women. Now a weazened female takes her place at the piano, on a slightly raised platform at one side of the room. She begins to play. The dancing begins. It is not woman with man; the dancing is informal. Some dance together, and some dance alone; some sing the melody of the tune, others shriek, but all make a noise. Faster and faster and louder and louder the music is pounded out, and the dancing becomes wilder and wilder. A tray of glasses is kicked from the upturned palm of a sweaty waiter. Waiter, broken glass, dancer, all lie, a laughing heap, on the floor. A soldier and a woman stand in opposite corners, facing the corners; then without turning, they back towards the middle of the room at a furious pace; the collision is appalling. Hand in hand the mad dancers encircle the room, throwing confetti, beer, anything. A heavy stein crushes two teeth — the wound bleeds — but the dancer does not stop. Noise and action and colour all become synonymous. There is no escape from the force. I am dragged into the circle. Suddenly the music stops. All the dancers stop. The soldier no longer looks at the woman by his side; not a word is spoken. People

lumber towards chairs. The woman looks for a glass of water to assuage the pain of her bleeding mouth. I think Jaques-Dalcroze is right when he seeks to unite spectator and actor, drama and public.

IV

In the preceding section I may have too strongly insisted upon the relation of the folk-song to the dance. It is true that the two are seldom separated in performance (although not all songs are danced; for example, the *cañas* and *playeras* of Andalusia). However, most of the folk-songs of Spain are intended to be danced; they are built on dance-rhythms and they bear the names of dances. Thus the jota is always danced to the same music, although the variations are great at different times and in different provinces. It is, of course, when the folk-songs are danced that they make their best effect, in the polyrhythm achieved by the opposing rhythms of guitar-player, dancer, and singer. When there is no dancer the defect is sometimes overcome by some one tapping a stick on the ground in imitation of resounding heels.

Blind beggars have a habit of singing the songs, in certain provinces, with a wealth of florid orna-

ment, such ornament as is always associated with oriental airs in performance, and this ornament still plays a considerable rôle when the vocalist becomes an integral part of the accompaniment for a dancer. Chabrier gives several examples of it in one of his letters. In the circumstances it can readily be seen that Spanish folk-songs written down are pretty bare recollections of the real thing, and when sung by singers who have no knowledge of the traditional manner of performing them they are likely to sound fairly banal. The same thing might be said of the negro folk-songs of America, or the folk-songs of Russia or Hungary, but with much less truth, for the folk-songs of these countries usually possess a melodic interest which is seldom inherent in the folk-songs of Spain. To make their effect they must be performed by Spaniards, as nearly as possible after the manner of the people. Indeed, their spirit and their polyrhythmic effects are much more essential to their proper interpretation than their melody, as many witnesses have pointed out.

Spanish music, indeed, much of it, is actually unpleasant to Western ears; it lacks the sad monotony and the wailing intensity of true oriental music; much of it is loud and blaring, like the hot sunglare of the Iberian peninsula. However,

many a Western or Northern European has found pleasure in listening by the hour to the strains, which often sound as if they were improvised, sung by some beggar or mountaineer.

The collections of these songs are not in any sense complete and few of them attempt more than a collocation of the songs of one locality or people. Deductions have been drawn. For example it is noted that the Basque songs are irregular in melody and rhythm and are further marked by unusual tempos, 5-8, or 7-4. In Aragon and Navarre the popular song (and dance) is the jota; in Galicia, the seguidilla; the Catalonian songs resemble the folk-tunes of Southern France. The Andalusian songs, like the dances of that province, are the most beautiful of all, often truly oriental in their rhythm and floridity. In Spain the gipsy has become an integral part of the popular life, and it is difficult at times to determine what is *flamenco* and what is Spanish. However, collections (few to be sure) have been attempted of gipsy songs.

Elsewhere in this rambling article I have touched on the *villancicos* and the early song-writers. To do justice to these subjects would require a good deal more space and a different intention. Those who are interested in them may

pursue these matters in Pedrell's various works. The most available collection of Spanish folk-tunes is that issued by P. Lacome and J. Puig y Alsubide (Paris, 1872). There are several collections of Basque songs; Demofilo's "Coleccion de Cantos Flamencos" (Seville, 1881), Cecilio Ocon's collection of Andalusian folk-songs, and F. Rodriguez Marin's "Cantos Populares Españoles" (Seville, 1882–3) may also be mentioned.

V

After the bullfight the most popular form of amusement in Spain is the zarzuela, the only distinctive art-form which Spanish music has evolved, but there has been no progress; the form has not changed, except perhaps to degenerate, since its invention in the early seventeenth century. Soriano Fuertes and other writers have devoted pages to grieving because Spanish composers have not taken occasion to make something grander and more important out of the zarzuela. The fact remains that they have not, although, small and great alike, they have all taken a hand at writing these entertainments. But as they found the zarzuela, so they have left it. It must be conceded that the form is quite distinct from

that of opera and should not be confused with it. And the Spaniards are probably right when they assert that the zarzuela is the mother of the French opéra-bouffe. At least it must be admitted that Offenbach and Lecocq and their precursors owe something of the germ of their inspiration to the Spanish form. To-day the melody chests of the zarzuela markets are plundered to find tunes for French *revues*, and such popular airs as *La Paraguaya* and *Y . . . Como le Vá?* were originally danced and sung in Spanish theatres. The composer of these airs, J. Valverde *fils*, indeed found the French market so good that he migrated to Paris, and for some time has been writing *musique mélangée . . . une moitié de chaque nation.* So *La Rose de Grenade*, composed for Paris, might have been written for Spain, with slight melodic alterations and tauromachian allusions in the book.

The zarzuela is usually a one-act piece (although sometimes it is permitted to run into two or more acts) in which the music is freely interrupted by spoken dialogue, and that in turn gives way to national dances. Very often the entire score is danced as well as sung. The subject is usually comic and often topical, although it may be serious, poetic, or even tragic. The

actors often introduce dialogue of their own, "gagging" freely; sometimes they engage in long impromptu conversations with members of the audience. They also embroider on the music after the fashion of the great singers of the old Italian opera (Dr. de Lafontaine asserts that Spanish audiences, even in cabarets, demand embroidery of this sort). The music is spirited and lively, and in the dances, Andalusian, *flamenco*, or Sevillan, as the case may be, it attains its best results. H. V. Hamilton, in his essay on the subject in Grove's Dictionary, says, "The music is . . . apt to be vague in form when the national dance and folk-song forms are avoided. The orchestration is a little blatant." It will be seen that this description suits Granados's *Goyescas* (the opera), which is on its safest ground during the dances and becomes excessively vague at other times; but *Goyescas* is not a zarzuela, because there is no spoken dialogue. Otherwise it bears the earmarks. A zarzuela stands somewhere between a French *revue* and opéra-comique. It is usually, however, more informal in tone than the latter and often decidedly more serious than the former. All the musicians in Spain since the form was invented (excepting, of course, certain exclusively religious composers), and most of the

poets and playwrights, have contributed numerous examples. Thus Calderon wrote the first zarzuela, and Lope de Vega contributed words to entertainments much in the same order. In our day Spain's leading dramatist, Echegaray (died 1916), has written one of the most popular zarzuelas, *Gigantes y Cabezudos* (the music by Caballero). The subject is the fiesta of Santa Maria del Pilar. It has had many a long run and is often revived. Another very popular zarzuela, which was almost, if not quite, heard in New York, is *La Gran Via* (by Valverde, *père*), which has been performed in London in extended form. The principal theatres for the zarzuela in Madrid are (or were until recently) that of the Calle de Jovellanos, called the Teatro de Zarzuela, and the Apolo. Usually four separate zarzuelas are performed in one evening before as many audiences.

La Gran Via, which in some respects may be considered a typical zarzuela, consists of a string of dance-tunes, with no more homogeneity than their national significance would suggest. There is an introduction and polka, a waltz, a tango, a jota, a mazurka, a schottische, another waltz, and a two-step (*paso-doble*). The tunes have little distinction; nor can the orchestration be considered brilliant. There is a great deal of noise and

variety of rhythm, and when presented correctly the effect must be precisely that of one of the dance-halls described by Chabrier. The zarzuela, to be enjoyed, in fact, must be seen in Spain. Like Spanish dancing it requires a special audience to bring out its best points. There must be a certain electricity, at least an element of sympathy, to carry the thing through successfully. Examination of the scores of zarzuelas (many of them have been printed and some of them are to be seen in our libraries) will convince any one that Mr. Ellis is speaking mildly when he says that the Spaniards love noise. However, the combination of this noise with beautiful women, dancing, elaborate rhythm, and a shouting audience, seems to almost equal the café-concert dancing and the tauromachian spectacles in Spanish popular affection. (Of course, as I have suggested, there are zarzuelas more serious melodically and dramatically; but as *La Gran Via* is frequently mentioned by writers as one of the most popular examples, it may be selected as typical of the larger number of these entertainments.)

H. V. Hamilton says that the first performance of a zarzuela took place in 1628 (Pedrell gives the date as October 29, 1629), during the reign of Felipe IV, in the Palace of the Zarzuela (so

called because it was surrounded by *zarzas*, brambles). It was called *El Jardin de Falerina;* the text was by the great Calderon and the music by Juan Risco, chapelmaster of the cathedral at Cordova, according to Mr. Hamilton, who doubtless follows Soriano Fuertes on this detail. Soubies, following the more modern studies of Pedrell, gives Jose Peyró the credit. Pedrell, in his richly documented work, "Teatro Lírico Española anterior al siglo XIX," attributes the music of this zarzuela to Peyró and gives an example of it. The first Spanish opera dates from the same period, Lope de Vega's *La Selva sin Amor* (1629). As a matter of fact, many of the plays of Calderon and Lope de Vega were performed with music to heighten the effect of the declamation, and musical curtain-raisers and interludes were performed before and in the midst of all of them. Lana, Palomares, Benavente and Hidalgo were among the musicians who contributed music to the theatre of this period. Hidalgo wrote the music for Calderon's zarzuela, *Ni Amor se Libre de Amor.* To the same group belong Miguel Ferrer, Juan de Navas, Sebastien de Navas, and Jéronimo de la Torre. (Examples of the music of these men may be found in the aforementioned "Teatro Lírico.") Until 1659

zarzuelas were written by the best poets and composers and frequently performed on royal birthdays, at royal marriages, and on many other occasions; but after that date the art fell into a decline and seems to have been in eclipse during the whole of the eighteenth century. According to Soriano Fuertes the beginning of the reign of Felipe V marked the introduction of Italian opera into Spain (more popular than Spanish opera there to this day) and the decadence of nationalism (whole pages of Fuertes read very much like the plaints of modern English composers about the neglect of national composers in their country). In 1829 there was a revival of interest in Spanish music and a conservatory was founded in Madrid. (For a discussion of this later period the reader is referred to "La Opera Española en el Siglo XIX," by Antonio Peña y Goñi, 1881.) This interest has been fostered by Fuertes and Pedrell, and the younger composers to-day are taking some account of it. There is hope, indeed, that Spanish music may again take its place in the world of art.

Of course, the zarzuela did not spring into being out of nowhere and nothing, and the true origins are not entirely obscure. It is generally agreed that a priest, Juan del Encina (born at Sala-

manca, 1468), was the true founder of the secular theatre in Spain. His dramatic compositions are in the nature of eclogues based on Virgilian models. In all of these there is singing and in one a dance. Isabel la Católica in the fifteenth century always had at her command a troop of musicians and poets who comforted and consoled her in her chapel with motets and *plegarias* (French, *prière*), and in the royal apartments with *canciones* and *villancicos*. (*Canciones* are songs inclining towards the ballad-form. *Villancicos* are songs in the old Spanish measure; they receive their name from their rustic character, as supposedly they were first composed by the *villanos* or peasants for the nativity and other festivals of the church.) "It is necessary to search for the true origins of the Spanish musical spectacle," states Soubies, "in the *villancicos* and *cantacillos* which alternated with the dialogue in the works of Juan del Encina and Lucas Fernandez, without forgetting the *ensaladas*, the *jacaras*, etc., which served as intermezzi and curtain-raisers." These were sung before the curtain, before the drama was performed (and during the intervals, with jokes added) by women in court dress, and later created a form of their own (besides contributing to the creation of the zar-

zuela), the *tonadilla*, which, accompanied by a guitar or violin and interspersed with dances, was very popular for a number of years. H. V. Hamilton is probably on sound ground when he says, "That the first zarzuela was written with an express desire for expansion and development is, however, not so certain as that it was the result of a wish to inaugurate the new house of entertainment with something entirely original and novel."

VI

We have Richard Ford's testimony that Spain was not very musical in his day. The Reverend Henry Cart de Lafontaine says that the contemporary musical services in the churches are not to be considered seriously from an artistic point of view. Emmanuel Chabrier was impressed with the fact that the music for dancing was almost entirely rhythmic in its effect, strummed rudely on the guitar, the spectators meanwhile making such a din that it was practically impossible to distinguish a melody, had there been one. And all observers point at the Italian opera, which is still the favourite opera in Spain (in Barcelona at the Liceo three weeks of opera in Catalon is given after the regular season in Italian; in Madrid

at the Teatro-Real the Spanish season is scattered through the Italian), and at Señor Arbós's concerts (the same Señor Arbós who was once concert master of the Boston Symphony Orchestra), at which Brandenburg concertos and Beethoven symphonies are more frequently performed than works by Albeniz. Still there are, and have always been during the course of the last century, Spanish composers, some of whom have made a little noise in the outer world, although a good many have been content to spend their artistic energy on the manufacture of zarzuelas — in other words, to make a good deal of noise in Spain. In most modern instances, however, there has been a revival of interest in the national forms, and folk-song and folk-dance have contributed their important share to the composers' work. No one man has done more to encourage this interest in nationalism than Felipe Pedrell, who may be said to have begun in Spain the work which the "Five" accomplished in Russia. Pedrell says in his "Handbook" (Barcelona, 1891; Heinrich and Co.; French translation by Bertal; Paris, Fischbacher): "The popular song, the voice of the people, the pure primitive inspiration of the anonymous singer, passes through the alembic of contemporary art and one obtains thereby its

quintessence; the composer assimilates it and then reveals it in the most delicate form that music alone is capable of rendering form in its technical aspect, this thanks to the extraordinary development of the technique of our art in this epoch. The folk-song lends the accent, the background, and modern art lends all that it possesses, its conventional symbolism and the richness of form which is its patrimony. The frame is enlarged in such a fashion that the *lied* makes a corresponding development; could it be said then that the national lyric drama is the same *lied* expanded? Is not the national lyric drama the product of the force of absorption and creative power? Do we not see in it faithfully reflected not only the artistic idiosyncrasy of each composer, but all the artistic manifestations of the people?" There is always the search for new composers in Spain and always the hope that a man may come who will be acclaimed by the world. As a consequence, the younger composers in Spain often receive more adulation than is their due. It must be remembered that the most successful Spanish music is not serious, the Spanish are more themselves in the lighter vein.

I hesitate for a moment on the name of Martin y Solar, born at Valencia; died at St. Petersburg,

1806; called "The Italian" by the Spaniards on account of his musical style, and "lo Spagnuolo" by the Italians. Da Ponte wrote several opera-books for him, *l'Arbore di Diana, la Cosa Rara,* and *La Capricciosa Corretta* (a version of *The Taming of the Shrew*) among others. It is to be seen that he is without importance if considered as a composer distinctively Spanish and I have made this slight reference to him solely to recount how Mozart quoted an air from one of his operas in the supper scene of *Don Giovanni.* At the time Martin y Solar was better liked in Vienna than Mozart himself and the air in question was as well known as say Musetta's waltz is known to us.

Juan Chrysostomo Arriaga, born in Bilbao 1808; died 1828 (these dates are given in Grove: 1806–1826), is another matter. He might have become better known had he lived longer. As it is, some of his music has been performed in London and Paris, and perhaps in America, although I have no record of it. He studied in Paris at the Conservatoire, under Fétis for harmony, and Baillot for violin. Before he went to Paris even, as a child, with no knowledge of the rules of harmony, he had written an opera! Cherubini declared his fugue for eight voices on the words in the Credo, "Et Vitam Venturi" a veritable chef

d'œuvre, at least there is a legend to this effect. In 1824 he wrote three quartets, an overture, a symphony, a mass, and some French cantatas and romances. Garcia considered his opera *Los Esclavas Felices* so good that he attempted, unsuccessfully, to secure for it a Paris hearing. It has been performed in Bilbao, which city, I think, celebrated the centenary of the composer's birth.

Manuel Garcia is better known to us as a singer, an impresario, and a father, than as a composer! Still he wrote a good deal of music (so did Mme. Malibran; for a list of the diva's compositions I must refer the reader to Arthur Pougin's biography). Fétis enumerates seventeen Spanish, nineteen Italian, and seven French operas by Garcia. He had works produced in Madrid, at the Opéra in Paris (*La mort du Tasse* and *Florestan*), at the Italiens in Paris (*Fazzoletto*), at the Opéra-Comique in Paris (*Deux Contrats*), and at many other theatres. However, when all is said and done, Manuel Garcia's reputation still rests on his singing and his daughters. His compositions are forgotten; nor was his music, much of it, probably, truly Spanish. (However, I have heard a polo [serenade] from an opera called *El Poeta Calculista*, which is so Spanish in accent and harmony — and so beau-

tiful — that it has found a place in a collection of folk-tunes!)

Miguel Hilarion Eslava (born in Burlada, October 21, 1807, died at Madrid, July 23, 1878) is chiefly famous for his compilation, the "Lira Sacra-Hispana," mentioned heretofore. He also composed over 140 pieces of church music, masses, motets, songs, etc., after he had been appointed chapelmaster of Queen Isabella in 1844, and several operas, including *Il Solitario*, *La Tregua di Ptolemaide*, and *Pedro el Cruél*. He also wrote several books of theory and composition: "Método de Solfeo" (1846) and "Escuela de Armonía y Composición" in three parts (harmony, composition, and melody). He edited (1855–6) the "Gaceta Músical de Madrid."

There is the celebrated virtuoso, Pablo de Sarasate, who wrote music, but his memory is perhaps better preserved in Whistler's diabolical portrait than in his own compositions.

Felipe Pedrell (born February 19, 1841) is also perhaps more important as a writer on musical subjects and for his influence on the younger school of composers (he teaches in the conservatory of Barcelona, and his attitude towards nationalism has already been discussed), than he is as a composer. Still, Edouard Lopez-Chavarri

does not hesitate to pronounce his trilogy *Los Pireneos* (Barcelona, 1902; the prologue was performed in Venice in 1897) the most important work for the theatre written in Spain. His first opera, *El Último Abencerrajo*, was produced in Barcelona in 1874. Some of his other works are *Quasimodo*, 1875; *El Tasso a Ferrara*, *Cleopatra*, *Mazeppa* (Madrid, 1881), *Celestine* (1904), and *La Matinada* (1905). J. A. Fuller-Maitland says that the influence of Wagner is traceable in all his stage work. (Wagner is adored in Spain; *Parsifal* was given eighteen times in one month at the Liceo in Barcelona.) If this be true, his case will be found to bear other resemblances to that of the Russian "Five," who found it difficult to exorcise all foreign influences in their pursuit of nationalism.

He was made a member of the Spanish Academy in 1894 and shortly thereafter became Professor of Musical History and Æsthetics at the Royal Conservatory at Madrid. Besides his "Hispaniae Schola Musica Sacra" he has written a number of other books, and translated Richter's treatise on Harmony into Spanish. He has made several excursions into the history of folk-lore and the principal results are contained in "Músicos Anónimos" and "Por nuestra Música."

Other works are "Teatro Lírico Español anterior al siglo XIX," "Lírica Nacionalizada," "De Música Religiosa," "Músiquerias y mas Músiquesias." One of his books, "Músicos Contemporáneos y de Otros Tempos" (in the library of the Hispanic Society of New York) is very catholic in its range of subject. It includes essays on the *Don Quixote* of Strauss, the *Boris Godunow* of Moussorgsky, Smetana, Manuel Garcia, Edward Elgar, Jaques-Dalcroze, Bruckner, Mahler, Albeniz, Palestrina, Busoni, and the tenth symphony of Beethoven!

In John Towers's extraordinary compilation, "Dictionary-Catalogue of Operas," it is stated that Manuel Fernandez Caballero (born in 1835) wrote sixty-two operas, and the names of them are given. He was a pupil of Fuertes (harmony) and Eslava (composition) at the Madrid Conservatory and later became very popular as a writer of zarzuelas. I have already mentioned his *Gigantes y Cabezudos* for which Echegaray furnished the libretto. Among his other works in this form are *Los Dineros del Sacristan, Los Africanistas* (Barcelona, 1894), *El Cabo Primero* (Barcelona, 1895), and *La Rueda de la Fortuna* (Madrid, 1896).

At a concert given in the New York Hippo-

drome, April 3, 1911, Mme. Tetrazzini sang a Spanish song, which was referred to the next day by the reviewers of the "New York Times" and the "New York Globe." To say truth the soprano made a great effect with the song, although it was written for a low voice. It was *Carceleras*, from Ruperto Chapí's zarzuela *Hija del Zebedeo*. Chapí was one of the most prolific and popular composers of Spain during the last century. He produced countless zarzuelas and nine children. He was born at Villena March 27, 1851, and he died March 25, 1909, a few months earlier than his compatriot Isaac Albeniz. He was admitted to the conservatory of Madrid in 1867 as a pupil of piano and harmony. In 1869 he obtained the first prize for harmony and he continued to obtain prizes until in 1874 he was sent to Rome by the Academy of Fine Arts. He remained for some time in Italy and Paris. In 1875 the Teatro Real of Madrid played his *La Hija de Jefté* sent from Rome. The following is an incomplete list of his operas and zarzuelas: *Via Libra*, *Los Gendarmes*, *El Rey que Rabio* (3 acts), *La Verbena de la Paloma*, *El Reclamo*, *La Tempestad*, *La Bruja*, *La Leyenda del Monje*, *Las Campanados*, *La Czarina*, *El Milagro de la Virgen*, *Roger de Flor* (3 acts), *Las Naves de Cortes*,

Circe (3 acts), *A qui Base Farsa un Hombre, Juan Francisco* (3 acts, 1905; rewritten and presented in 1908 as *Entre Rocas*), *Los Madrileños* (1908), *La Dama Roja* (1 act, 1908), *Hesperia* (1908), *Las Calderas de Pedro Bolero* (1909) and *Margarita la Tornera*, presented just before his death without success.

His other works include an oratorio, *Los Angeles*, a symphonic poem, *Escenas de Capa y Espada*, a symphony in D, *Moorish Fantasy* for orchestra, a serenade for orchestra, a trio for piano, violin and 'cello, songs, etc. Chapí was president of the Society of Authors and Composers, and when he died the King and Queen of Spain sent a telegram of condolence to his widow. There is a copy of his zarzuela, *Blasones y Talegas* in the New York Public Library.

I have already spoken of *Dolores*. It is one of a long series of operas and zarzuelas written by Tomás Bretón y Hernandez (born at Salamanca, December 29, 1850). First produced at Madrid, in 1895, it has been sung with success in such distant capitals as Buenos Ayres and Prague. I have been assured by a Spanish woman of impeccable taste that *Dolores* is charming, delightful in its fluent melody and its striking rhythms, thoroughly Spanish in style, but certain to find favour

in America, if it were produced here. Our own Eleanora de Cisneros at a Press Club Benefit in Barcelona appeared in Bretón's zarzuela *La Verbena de la Paloma.* Another of Bretón's famous zarzuelas is *Los Amantes de Ternel* (Madrid, 1889). His works for the theatre further include *Tabaré,* for which he wrote both words and music (Madrid, 1913); *Don Gil* (Barcelona, 1914); *Garin* (Barcelona, 1891); *Raquel* (Madrid, 1900); *Guzman el Bueno* (Madrid, 1876); *El Certamen de Cremona* (Madrid, 1906); *El Campanere de Begoña* (Madrid, 1878); *El Barberillo en Orán; Corona contra Corona* (Madrid, 1879); *Les Amores de un Príncipe* (Madrid, 1881); *El Clavel Rojo* (1899); *Covadonga* (1901); and *El Domingo de Ramos,* words by Echegaray (Madrid, 1894). His works for orchestra include: *En la Alhambra, Los Galeotes,* and *Escenas Andaluzas,* a suite. He has written three string quartets, a piano trio, a piano quintet, and an oratorio in two parts, *El Apocalipsis.*

Bretón is largely self-taught, and there is a legend that he devoured by himself Eslava's "School of Composition." He further wrote the music and conducted for a circus for a period of years. In the late seventies he conducted an orchestra, founding a new society, the Union

Artistico Musical, which is said to have been the beginning of the modern movement in Spain. It may throw some light on Spanish musical taste at this period to mention the fact that the performance of Saint-Saëns's *Danse macabre* almost created a riot. Later Bretón travelled. He appeared as conductor in London, Prague, and Buenos Ayres, among other cities outside of Spain, and when Dr. Karl Muck left Prague for Berlin, he was invited to succeed him in the Bohemian capital. In the contest held by the periodical " Blanco y Negro " in 1913 to decide who was the most popular writer, poet, painter, musician, sculptor, and toreador in Spain, Bretón as musician got the most votes. . . . He is at present the head of the Royal Conservatory in Madrid.

No Spanish composer (ancient or modern) is better known outside of Spain than Isaac Albeniz (born May 29, 1861, at Comprodon; died at Cambo, in the Pyrenees, May 25, 1909). His fame rests almost entirely on twelve piano pieces (in four books) entitled collectively *Iberia*, with which all concert goers are familiar. They have been performed here by Ernest Schelling, Leo Ornstein, and George Copeland, among other virtuosi. . . . I think one or two of these pieces must be

in the répertoire of every modern pianist. Albeniz did not imbibe his musical culture in Spain and to the day of his death he was more friendly with the modern French group of composers than with those of his native land. In his music he sees Spain with French eyes. He studied at Paris with Marmontel; at Brussels with Louis Brassin; and at Weimar with Liszt (he is mentioned in the long list of pupils in Huneker's biography of Liszt, but there is no further account of him in that book); he studied composition with Jadassohn, Joseph Dupont, and F. Kufferath. His symphonic poem, *Catalonia*, has been performed in Paris by the Colonne Orchestra. I have no record of any American performance. For a time he devoted himself to the piano. He was a virtuoso and he has even played in London, but later in life he gave up this career for composition. He wrote several operas and zarzuelas, among them a light opera, *The Magic Opal* (produced in London, 1893), *Enrico Clifford* (Barcelona, 1894; later heard in London), *Pepita Jiminez* (Barcelona, 1895; afterwards given at the Théâtre de la Monnaie in Brussels), and *San Anton de la Florida* (produced in Brussels as *l'Ermitage Fleurie*). He left unfinished at his death another opera destined for production in

Brussels at the Monnaie, *Merlin l'Enchanteur*. None of his operas, with the exception of *Pepita Jiminez*, which has been performed, I am told, in all Spanish countries, achieved any particular success, and it is *Iberia* and a few other piano pieces which will serve to keep his memory green.

Juan Bautista Pujol (1836–1898) gained considerable reputation in Spain as a pianist and as a teacher of and composer for that instrument. He also wrote a method for piano students entitled "Nuevo Mecanismo del Piano." His further claim to attention is due to the fact that he was one of the teachers of Granados.

The names of Pahissa (both as conductor and composer; one of his symphonic works is called *The Combat*), Garcia Robles, represented by an *Epitalame*, and Gibert, with two *Marines*, occur on the programmes of the two concerts devoted in the main to Spanish music, at the second of which (Barcelona, 1910; conductor Franz Beidler) Granados's *Dante* was performed.

E. Fernandez Arbós (born in Madrid, December 25, 1863) is better known as a conductor and violinist than as composer. Still, he has written music, especially for his own instrument. He was a pupil of both Vieuxtemps and Joachim; and he has travelled much, teaching at the Hamburg

Conservatory, and acting as concertmaster for the Boston Symphony and the Glasgow Orchestras. He has been a professor at the Madrid conservatory for some time, giving orchestral and chamber music concerts, both there and in London. He has written at least one light opera, presumably a zarzuela, *El Centro de la Tierra* (Madrid; December 22, 1895); three trios for piano and strings, songs, and an orchestral suite.

I have already referred to the Valverdes, father and son. The father, in collaboration with Federico Chueca, wrote *La Gran Via*. Many another popular zarzuela is signed by him. The son has lived so long in France that much of his music is cast in the style of the French music hall; too it is in a popular vein. Still in his best tangos he strikes a Spanish folk-note not to be despised. He wrote the music for the play, *La Maison de Danse*, produced, with Polaire, at the Vaudeville in Paris, and two of his operettas, *La Rose de Grenade* and *l'Amour en Espagne*, have been performed in Paris, not without success, I am told by La Argentina, who danced in them. Other modern composers who have been mentioned to me are Manuel de Falla, Joaquin Turina (George Copeland has played his *A los Toros*), Usandihaga (who died in 1915), the composer of *Los Golondri-*

nos, Oscar Erpla, Conrado del Campo, and Enrique Morera.

Enrique Granados was perhaps the first of the important Spanish composers to visit North America. His place in the list of modern Iberian musicians is indubitably a high one; though it must not be taken for granted that *all* the best music of Spain crosses the Pyrenees (for reasons already noted it is evident that some Spanish music can never be heard to advantage outside of Spain), and it is by no means to be taken for granted that Granados was a greater musician than several who dwell in Barcelona and Madrid without making excursions into the outer world. In his own country I am told Granados was admired chiefly as a pianist, and his performances on that instrument in New York stamped him as an original interpretative artist, one capable of extracting the last tonal meaning out of his own compositions for the pianoforte, which are his best work.

Shortly after his arrival in New York he stated to several reporters that America knew nothing about Spanish music, and that Bizet's *Carmen* was not in any sense Spanish. I hold no brief for *Carmen* being Spanish but it is effective, and that *Goyescas* as an opera is not. In the first place,

its muddy and blatant orchestration would detract from its power to please (this opinion might conceivably be altered were the opera given under Spanish conditions in Spain). The manuscript score of *Goyescas* now reposes in the Museum of the Hispanic Society, in that interesting quarter of New York where the apartment houses bear the names of Goya and Velasquez, and it is interesting to note that it is a *piano* score. What has become of the orchestral partition and who was responsible for it I do not know. It is certain, however, that the miniature charm of the *Goyescas* becomes more obvious in the piano version, performed by Ernest Schelling or the composer himself, than in the opera house. The growth of the work is interesting. Fragments of it took shape in the composer's brain and on paper seventeen years ago, the result of the study of Goya's paintings in the Prado. These fragments were moulded into a suite in 1909 and again into an opera in 1914 (or before then). F. Periquet, the librettist, was asked to fit words to the score, a task which he accomplished with difficulty. Spanish is not an easy tongue to sing. To Mme. Barrientos this accounts for the comparatively small number of Spanish operas. *Goyescas*, like many a zarzuela, lags when the dance rhythms cease. I

find little joy myself in listening to "La Maja y el Ruiseñor"; in fact, the entire last scene sounds banal to my ears. In the four volumes of Spanish dances which Granados wrote for piano (published by the Sociedad Anónima Casa Dotesio in Barcelona) I console myself for my lack of interest in *Goyescas*. These lovely dances combine in their artistic form all the elements of the folk-dances as I have described them. They bespeak a careful study and an intimate knowledge of the originals. And any pianist, amateur or professional, will take joy in playing them.

Enrique Granados y Campina was born July 27, 1867, at Lerida, Catalonia. (He died March 24, 1916; a passenger on the *Sussex*, torpedoed in the English Channel.) From 1884 to 1887 he studied piano under Pujol and composition under Felipe Pedrell at the Madrid Conservatory. That the latter was his master presupposed on his part a valuable knowledge of the treasures of Spain's past and that, I think, we may safely allow him. There is, I am told, an interesting combination of classicism and folk-lore in his work. At any rate, Granados was a faithful disciple of Pedrell. In 1898 his zarzuela *Maria del Carmen* was produced in Madrid and has since been heard in Valencia, Barcelona, and other Spanish cities. Five

years later some fragments of another opera, *Foletto*, were produced at Barcelona. His third opera, *Liliana*, was produced at Barcelona in 1911. He wrote numerous songs to texts by the poet, Apeles Mestres; Galician songs, two symphonic poems, *La Nit del Mort* and *Dante* (performed by the Chicago Symphony Orchestra for the first time in America at the concerts of November 5 and 6, 1915); a piano trio, string quartet, and various books of piano music (*Danzas Españolas, Valses Poéticos, Bocetos, etc.*).

New York, March 20, 1916.

Shall We Realize Wagner's Ideals?

Shall We Realize Wagner's Ideals?

HISTORIANS of operatic phenomena have observed that fashions in music change; the popular Donizetti and Bellini of one century are suffered to exist during the next only for the sake of the opportunity they afford to some brilliant songstress. New tastes arise, new styles in music. Dukas's generally unrelished (and occasionally highly appreciated) *Ariane et Barbe-Bleue* may not be powerful enough to establish a place for itself in the répertoire, but its direct influence on composers and its indirect influence on auditors make this lyric drama highly important as an indication of the future of opera as a fine art. Moussorgsky's *Boris Godunow*, first given in this country some forty years after its production in Russia, is another matter. That score contains a real thrill in itself, a thrill which, once felt, makes it difficult to feel the intensity of a Wagner drama again: because Wagner is becoming just a little bit old-fashioned. *Lohengrin* and *Tannhäuser* are becoming a trifle shop-worn. They do not glitter with the glory of a *Don Giovanni* or the invincible splendour of an *Armide*. There are parts of *Die Walküre* which are growing old.

Now Wagner, in many ways the greatest figure as opera composer which the world has yet produced, could hold his place in the singing theatres for many decades to come if some proper effort were made to do justice to his dramas, the justice which in a large measure has been done to his music. This effort at present is not being made.

In the Metropolitan Opera House season of 1895–6, when Jean de Reszke first sang Tristan in German, the opportunity seemed to be opened for further breaks with what a Munich critic once dubbed "Die Bayreuther Tradition oder Der misverstandene Wagner." For up to that time, in spite of some isolated examples, it had come to be considered, in utter misunderstanding of Wagner's own wishes and doctrines, as a part of the technique of performing a Wagner music-drama to shriek, howl, or bark the tones, rather than to sing them. There had been, I have said, isolated examples of German singers, and artists of other nationalities singing in German, who had *sung* their phrases in these lyric plays, but the appearance in the Wagner rôles, in German, of a tenor whose previous appearances had been made largely in works in French and Italian which demanded the use of what is called *bel canto* (it means only *good singing*) brought about a controversy which

even yet is raging in some parts of the world. Should Wagner be sung, in the manner of Jean de Reszke, or shouted in the traditional manner? Was it possible to sing the music and make the effect the Master expected? In answer it may be said that never in their history have *Siegfried*, *Tristan und Isolde*, and *Lohengrin* met with such success as when Jean de Reszke and his famous associates appeared in them, and it may also be said that since that time there has been a consistent effort on the part of the management of the Metropolitan Opera House (and other theatres as well) to provide artists for these dramas who could sing them, and sing them as Italian operas are sung, an effort to which opera directors have been spurred by a growing insistence on the part of the public.

It was the first break with the Bayreuth bugbear, tradition, and it might have been hoped that this tradition would be stifled in other directions, with this successful precedent in mind; but such has not been the case. As a result of this failure to follow up a beneficial lead, in spite of orchestral performances which bring out the manifold beauties of the scores and in spite of single impersonations of high rank by eminent artists, we are beginning to see the Wagner dramas falling into

decline, long before the appointed time, because their treatment has been held in the hands of Cosima Wagner, who — with the best of intentions, of course — not only insists (at Bayreuth she is mistress, and her influence on singers, conductors, stage directors and scene painters throughout the world is very great) on the carrying out of Wagner's theories, as she understands them, and even when they are only worthy of being ignored, but who also (whether rightly or wrongly) is credited with a few traditions of her own. Wagner indeed invented a new form of drama, but he did not have the time or means at his disposal to develop an adequate technique for its performance.

We are all familiar with the Bayreuth version of Wotan in *Die Walküre* which makes of that tragic father-figure a boisterous, silly old scold (so good an artist as Carl Braun, whose Hagen portrait is a masterpiece, has followed this tradition literally); we all know too well the waking Brünnhilde who salutes the sun in the last act of *Siegfried* with gestures seemingly derived from the exercises of a Swedish *turnverein*, following the harp arpeggios as best she may; we remember how Wotan, seizing the sword from the dead Fasolt's hand, brandishes it to the tune of the sword *motiv*, indicating the coming of the hero,

Siegfried, as the gods walk over the rainbow bridge to Walhalla at the end of *Das Rheingold;* we smile over the tame horse which some chorus man, looking the while like a truck driver who is not good to animals, holds for Brünnhilde while she sings her final lament in *Götterdämmerung;* we laugh aloud when he assists her to lead the unfiery steed, who walks as leisurely as a well-fed horse would towards oats, into the burning pyre; we can still see the picture of the three Rhine maidens, bobbing up and down jerkily behind a bit of gauze, reminiscent of visions of mermaids at the Eden Musée; we all have seen Tristan and Isolde, drunk with the love potion, swimming (there is no other word to describe this effect) towards each other; and no perfect Wagnerite can have forgotten the gods and the giants standing about in the fourth scene of *Das Rheingold* for all the world as if they were the protagonists of a fantastic minstrel show. (At a performance of *Parsifal* in Chicago Vernon Stiles discovered while he was on the stage that his suspenders, which held his tights in place, had snapped. For a time he pressed his hands against his groin; this method proving ineffectual, he finished the scene with his hands behind his back, pressed firmly against his waist-line. As he left the stage, at the conclusion of the act, breathing

a sigh of relief, he met Loomis Taylor, the stage director. "Did you think my new gesture was due to nervousness?" he asked. "No," answered Taylor, "I thought it was Bayreuth tradition!")

These are a few of the Bayreuth precepts which are followed. There are others. There are indeed many others. We all know the tendency of conductors who have been tried at Bayreuth, or who have come under the influence of Cosima Wagner, to drag out the *tempi* to an exasperating degree. I have heard performances of *Lohengrin* which were dragged by the conductor some thirty minutes beyond the ordinary time. (Again the Master is held responsible for this tradition, but though all composers like to have their own music last in performance as long as possible, the tradition, perhaps, is just as authentic as the story that Richard Strauss, when conducting *Tristan und Isolde* at the Prinz-Regenten-Theatre in Munich, saved twenty minutes on the ordinary time it takes to perform the work in order to return as soon as possible to an interrupted game of Skat.)

But it is not tradition alone that is killing the Wagner dramas. In many instances and in most singing theatres silly traditions are aided in their work of destruction by another factor in hasty

production. I am referring to the frequent liberties which have been taken with the intentions of the author. For, when expediency is concerned, no account is taken of tradition, and, curiously enough, expediency breaks with those traditions which can least stand being tampered with. The changes, in other words, have not been made for the sake of improvement, but through carelessness, or to save time or money, or for some other cognate reason. An example of this sort of thing is the custom of giving the *Ring* dramas as a cycle in a period extending over four weeks, one drama a week. It is also customary at the Metropolitan Opera House in New York to entrust the rôle of Brünnhilde, or of Siegfried, to a different interpreter in each drama, so that the Brünnhilde who wakes in *Siegfried* is not at all the Brünnhilde who goes to sleep in *Die Walküre.* Then, although Brünnhilde exploits a horse in *Götterdämmerung,* she possesses none in *Die Walküre;* none of the other valkyries has a horse; Fricka's goats have been taken away from her, and she walks to the mountain-top holding her skirts from under her feet for all the world as a lady of fashion might as she ascended from a garden into a ballroom. At the Metropolitan Opera House, and at other thea-

tres where I have seen the dramas, the decorations of the scenes of Brünnhilde's falling asleep and of her awakening are quite different.

Naturally, ingenious explanations have been devised to fit these cases. For instance, one is told that animals are *never* at home on the stage. This explanation suffices perhaps for the animals which do not appear, but how about those which do? The vague phrase, "the exigencies of the répertoire," is mentioned as the reason for the extension of the cycle over several weeks, that and the further excuse that the system permits people from nearby towns to make weekly visits to the metropolis. Of course, Wagner intended that each of the *Ring* dramas should follow its predecessor on succeeding days in a festival week. If the *Ring* were so given in New York every season with due preparation, careful staging, and the best obtainable cast, the occasions would draw audiences from all over America, as the festivals at Bayreuth and Munich do indeed draw audiences from all over the world. Ingenuous is the word which best describes the explanation for the change in Brünnhildes; one is told that the out-of-town subscribers to the series prefer to hear as many singers as possible. They wish to "compare" Brünnhildes, so to speak. Perhaps the

real reason for divergence from common sense is the difficulty the director of the opera-house would have with certain sopranos if one were allowed the full set of performances. As for the change in the setting of Brünnhilde's rock it is pure expediency, nothing else. In *Die Walküre*, in which, between acts, there is plenty of time to change the scenery, a heavy built promontory of rocks is required for the valkyrie brood to stand on. In *Siegfried* and *Götterdämmerung*, where the scenery must be shifted in short order, this particular setting is utilized only for duets. The heavier elements of the setting are no longer needed, and are dispensed with.

The mechanical devices demanded by Wagner are generally complied with in a stupidly clumsy manner. The first scene of *Das Rheingold* is usually managed with some effect now, although the swimming of the Rhine maidens, who are dressed in absurd long floating green nightgowns, is carried through very badly and seemingly without an idea that such things have been done a thousand times better in other theatres; the changes of scene in *Das Rheingold* are accomplished in such a manner that one fears the escaping steam is damaging the gauze curtains; the worm and the toad are silly contrivances; the effect of the rainbow is never

properly conveyed; the ride of the valkyries is frankly evaded by most stage managers; the bird in *Siegfried* flies like a sickly crow; the final scene in *Götterdämmerung* would bring a laugh from a Bowery audience: some flat scenery flaps over, a number of chorus ladies fall on their knees, there is much bulging about of a canvas sea, and a few red lights appear in the sky; the transformation scenes in *Parsifal* are carried out with as little fidelity to symbolism, or truth, or beauty; and the throwing of the lance in *Parsifal* is always seemingly a wire trick rather than a magical one.

The scenery for the Wagner dramas, in all the theatres where I have seen and heard them, has been built (and a great deal of it in recent years from new designs) with a seemingly absolute ignorance or determined evasion of the fact that there are artists who are now working in the theatre. In making this statement I can speak personally of performances I have seen at the Metropolitan Opera House, New York; the Auditorium, Chicago; Covent Garden Theatre, London; La Scala, Milan; the Opéra, Paris; and the Prinz-Regenten-Theatre in Munich. Are there theatres where the Wagner dramas are better given? I do not think so. Compare the scenery of *Götterdämmerung* at the Metropolitan Opera House with

that of *Boris Godunow*, and you will see how little care is being taken of Wagner's ideals. In the one case the flimsiest sort of badly painted and badly lighted canvas, mingled indiscriminately with plastic objects, boughs, branches, etc., placed next to painted boughs and branches, an effect calculated to throw the falsity of the whole scene into relief; in the other case, an example of a scene-painter's art wrought to give the highest effect to the drama it decorates. Take the decoration of the hall of the Gibichs in which long scenes are enacted in both the first and last acts of *Götterdämmerung*. The Gibichs are a savage, warlike, sinister, primitive race. Now it is not necessary that the setting in itself be strong, but it must suggest strength to the spectator. There is no need to bring stone blocks or wood blocks on the stage; the artist may work in black velvet if he wishes (it was of this material that Professor Roller contrived a dungeon cell in *Fidelio* which seemed to be built of stone ten feet thick). It will be admitted, I think, by any one who has seen the setting in question that it is wholly inadequate to express the meaning of the drama. The scenes could be sung with a certain effect in a Christian Science temple, but no one will deny, I should say, that the effect of the music may be greatly height-

ened by proper attention to the stage decoration and the movement of the characters in relation to the lighting and decoration. (I have used the Metropolitan Opera House, in this instance, as a convenient illustration; but the scenery there is no worse, on the whole, than it is in many of the other theatres named.)

The secret at the bottom of the whole matter is that the directors of the singing theatres wish to save themselves trouble. They will spend neither money nor energy in righting this wrong. It is easier to trust to tradition on the one hand and expediency on the other than it would be to engage an expert (one not concerned with what had been done, but one concerned with what to do) to produce the works. *Carmen* was losing its popularity in this country when Emma Calvé, who had broken all the rules made for the part by Galli-Marié, enchanted opera-goers with her fantastic conception of the gipsy girl. Bizet's work had dropped out of the répertoire again when Mme. Bressler-Gianoli arrived and carried it triumphantly through nearly a score of performances during the first season of Oscar Hammerstein's Manhattan Opera House. Geraldine Farrar and Toscanini resuscitated the Spanish jade a third time. An Olive Fremstad or a Lilli Lehmann or a

Milka Ternina can perform a like office for *Götterdämmerung* or *Tristan und Isolde;* but it is to a new producer, an Adolphe Appia or a Gordon Craig, that the theatre director must look for the final salvation of Wagner, through the complete realization of his own ideals. It must be obvious to any one that the more completely the meaning of his plays is exposed by the decoration, the lighting and the action, the greater the effect.

Adolphe Appia wrote a book called "Die Musik und die Inscenierung," which was published in German in 1899. (An earlier work, "La mise-en-scène du drame Wagnérien," appeared in Paris in 1893.) Since then his career has been strangely obscure for one whose effect on artists working at stage decoration has been greater than that of any other single man. In the second edition of his book, "On the Art of the Theatre," Gordon Craig, in a footnote, speaks thus of Appia: "Appia, *the foremost stage-decorator of Europe* (the italics are mine) is not dead. I was told that he was no more with us, so, in the first edition of this book, I included him among the shades. I first saw three examples of his work in 1908, and I wrote a friend asking, 'Where is Appia and how can we meet?' My friend replied, 'Poor Appia died some years ago.' This winter (1912) I saw

some of Appia's designs in a portfolio belonging to Prince Wolkonsky. They were divine; and I was told that the designer was still living."

Loomis Taylor, who, during the season of 1914–15, staged the Wagner operas at the Metropolitan Opera House (and it was not his fault that the staging was not improved; there is no stage director now working who has more belief in and knowledge of the artists of the theatre than Loomis Taylor) has written me, in response to a query, the following regarding Appia: "Adolphe Appia, I think, is a French-Swiss; he is a young man. The title of the book which made him famous, in its German translation, is 'Die Musik und die Inscenierung.' It was translated from the French by Princess Cantacuzène. . . . Five years ago I was told by Mrs. Houston Stewart Chamberlain that Appia was slowly but surely starving to death in some picturesque surroundings in Switzerland. I then tried to get various people in Germany interested in him, also proposing him to Hagemann as scenic artist for Mannheim. Two years later, before his starving process had reached its conclusion, I heard of him as collaborator with Jaques-Dalcroze at his temple of rhythm on the banks of the Elbe, outside of Dresden, where, I think, up to the outbreak of the war,

Appia was doing very good work, but what has become of him since I do not know.

"His book is very valuable; his suggestions go beyond the possibilities of the average Hof theatre, while in Bayreuth they have a similar effect to a drop of water upon a stone, sun-burned by the rays of Cosima's traditions. By being one of the first — if not *the* first — to put in writing the inconsistency of using painted perspective scenery and painted shadows with human beings on the stage, Appia became the fighter for plastic scenery. His sketch of the *Walküren* rock is the most beautiful scenic conception of Act III, *Die Walküre*, I know of or could imagine. To my knowledge no theatre has ever produced anything in conformity with Appia's sketches."

In a letter to me Hiram Kelly Moderwell, whose book, "The Theatre of To-day," is the best exposition yet published of the aims and results of the artists who are working in the theatre, writes as follows in regard to Appia: "Appia is now with Dalcroze at Hellerau and I believe has designed and perhaps produced all the things that have been done there in the last year or two. Previous to that I am almost certain he had done no actual stage work. Nobody else would give him free rein. But, as you know, he thought every-

thing out carefully as though he were doing the actual practical stage work. . . . By this time he has hit his 'third manner.' It's all cubes and parallelograms. It sounds like hell on paper but Maurice Browne told me it is very fine stuff. Browne says it is as much greater than Craig as Craig is greater than anybody else. All the recent Hellerau plays are in this third manner. They are lighted by Salzmann, indirect and diffused lighting, but not in the Fortuny style. I imagine the Hellerau stuff is rather too precious to go on the ordinary stage."

Mr. Moderwell's description of Appia's book is so completely illuminating that I feel I cannot do better than to quote the entire passage from "The Theatre of To-day": "Before his (Gordon Craig's) influence was felt, however, Adolphe Appia, probably the most powerful theorist of the new movement, had written his remarkable book, 'Die Musik und die Inscenierung.' In this, as an artist, he attempted to deduce from the content of the Wagner music dramas the proper stage settings for them. His conclusions anticipated much of the best work of recent years and his theories have been put into practice in more or less modified form on a great many stages — not so much

(if at all) for the Wagner dramas themselves, which are under a rigid tradition (the 'what the Master wished' myth), but for operas and the more lyric plays where the producer has artistic ability and a free hand in applying it.

"Appia started with the principle that the setting should make the actor the all-important fact on the stage. He saw the realistic impossibility of the realistic setting, and destructively analyzed the current modes of lighting and perspective effects. But, unlike the members of the more conventional modern school, he insisted that the stage is a three-dimension space and must be handled so as to make its depth living. He felt a contradiction between the living actor and the dead setting. He wished to bind them into one whole — the drama. How was this to be done?

"Appia's answer to this question is his chief claim to greatness — genius almost. His answer was —'By means of the lighting.' He saw the deadliness of the contemporary methods of lighting, and previsaged with a sort of inspiration the possibilities of new methods which have since become common. This was at a time when he had at his disposal none of the modern lighting systems. His foreseeing of modern practice by means of

rigid Teutonic logic in the service of the artist's intuition makes him one of the two or three foremost theorists of the modern movement.

"The lighting, for Appia, is the spiritual core, the soul of the drama. The whole action should be contained in it, somewhat as we feel the physical body of a friend to be contained in his personality. Appia's second great principle is closely connected with this. While the setting is obviously inanimate, the actor must in every way be emphasized and made living. And this can be accomplished, he says, only by a wise use of lighting, since it is the lights and shadows on a human body which reveal to our eyes the fact that the body is 'plastic' — that is, a flexible body of three dimensions. Appia would make the setting suggest only the atmosphere, not the reality of the thing it stands for, and would soften and beautify it with the lights. The actor he would throw constantly into prominence while keeping him always a part of the scene. All the elements and all the action of the drama he would bind together by the lights and shadows.

"With the most minute care each detail of lighting, each position of each character, in Appia's productions is studied out so that the dramatic meaning shall always be evident. Hence

any setting of his contains vastly more thought than is visible at a glance. It is designed to serve for every exigency of the scene — so that a character here shall be in full light at a certain point, while talking directly to a character who must be quite in the dark, or that the light shall just touch the fringe of one character's robe as she dies, or that the action shall all take place unimpeded, and so on. At the same time, needless to say, Appia's stage pictures are of the highest artistic beauty." [1]

In Appia's design for the third act of *Die Walküre*, so enthusiastically praised by Loomis Taylor, the rock of the valkyries juts like a huge promontory of black across the front of the scene, silhouetted against a clouded sky. So all the figures of the valkyries stand high on the rock and are entirely silhouetted, while Sieglinde below in front of the rock in the blackness, is hidden from the rage of the approaching Wotan. Any one who has seen this scene as it is ordinarily staged, without any reference to beauty or reason, will appreciate even this meagre description of an artist's intention, which has not yet been carried

[1] For a further discussion of Appia's work and its probable influence on Gordon Craig, see an article "Adolphe Appia and Gordon Craig" in my book "Music After the Great War."

out in any theatre with which I have acquaintance.

Appia's design for the first scene of *Parsifal* discloses a group of boughless, straight-stemmed pines, towering to heaven like the cathedral group at Vallombrosa. Overhead the dense foliage hides the forest paths from the sun. Light comes in through the centre at the back, where there is a vista of plains across to the mountains, on which one may imagine the castle of the Grail. He places a dynamic and dramatic value on light which it is highly important to understand in estimating his work. For example, his lighting of the second act of *Tristan und Isolde* culminates in a *pitch-dark* stage during the singing of the love-duet. This artist has designed the scenery for all the *Ring* and has indicated throughout what the lighting and action shall be.

I do not know that Gordon Craig has turned his attention to any particular Wagner drama, although he has made suggestions for several of them, but he could, if he would, devise a mode of stage decoration which would make the plays and their action as appealing in their beauty as the music and the singing often now are. In his book, "On the Art of the Theatre," he has been explicit in his descriptions of his designs for *Macbeth*, and

the rugged strength and symbolism of his settings and ideas for that tragedy proclaim perhaps his best right to be a leader in the reformation of the Wagner dramas, although, even then, it must be confessed that Craig is derived in many instances from Appia, whom Craig himself hails as the foremost stage decorator of Europe to-day.

Read Gordon Craig on *Macbeth* and you will get an idea of how an artist would go to work on *Tristan und Isolde* or *Götterdämmerung*. "I see two things, I see a lofty and steep rock, and I see the moist cloud which envelops the head of this rock. That is to say, a place for fierce and warlike men to inhabit, a place for phantoms to nest in. Ultimately this moisture will destroy the rock; ultimately these spirits will destroy the men. Now then, you are quick in your question as to what actually to create for the eye. I answer as swiftly — place there a rock! Let it mount high. Swiftly I tell you, convey the idea of a mist which hangs at the head of this rock. Now, have I departed at all for one-eighth of an inch from the vision which I saw in the mind's eye?

"But you ask me what form this rock shall take and what colour? What are the lines which are the lofty lines, and which are to be seen in any lofty cliff? Go to them, glance but a moment at

them; now quickly set them down on your paper; *the lines and their direction*, never mind the cliff. Do not be afraid to let them go high; they cannot go high enough; and remember that on a sheet of paper which is but two inches square you can make a line which seems to tower miles in the air, and you can do the same on your stage, for it is all a matter of proportion and has nothing to do with actuality.

"You ask about the colours? What are the colours which Shakespeare has indicated for us? Do not first look at Nature, but look at the play of the poet. Two, one for the rock, the man; one for the mist, the spirit. Now, quickly, take and accept this statement from me. Touch not a single other colour, but only these two colours through your whole progress of designing your scenes and your costumes, yet forget not that each colour contains many variations. If you are timid for a moment and mistrust yourself or what I tell, when the scene is finished you will not see with your eye the effect you have seen with your mind's eye when looking at the picture which Shakespeare has indicated."

The producers of the Wagner music dramas do not seem to have heard of Adolphe Appia. Gordon Craig is a myth to them. Reinhardt does not

exist. Have they ever seen the name of Stanislawsky? Do they know where his theatre is? Would they consider it sensible to spend three years in mounting *Hamlet?* Is the name of Fokine known to them? of Bakst? N. Roerich, Nathalie Gontcharova, Alexandre Benois, Theodore Federowsky? . . . One could go on naming the artists of the theatre. (Recently there have been evidences of an art movement in the theatre in America. Joseph Urban, first in Boston with the Boston Opera Company, and later in New York with various theatrical enterprises, may be mentioned as an important figure in this movement. His settings for *Monna Vanna* were particularly beautiful and he really seems to have revolutionized the staging of *revues* and similar light musical pieces. Robert Jones has done some very good work. I think he was responsible for the imaginative staging [in Gordon Craig's manner, to be sure] of the inner scenes in the Shakespeare mask, *Caliban.* But I would give the Washington Square Players credit for the most successful experiments which have been made in New York. In every instance they have attempted to suit the staging to the mood of the drama, and have usually succeeded admirably, at slight expense. They have developed a good deal of previously untried talent in this direction.

Lee Simonson, in particular, has achieved distinctive results. I have seldom seen better work of its kind on the stage than his settings for *The Magical City*, *Pierre Patelin*, and *The Seagull*. At the Metropolitan Opera House no account seems to be taken of this art movement, although during the season of 1915–16 in *The Taming of the Shrew* an attempt was made to emulate the very worst that has been done in modern Germany.)

For several years the Russian Ballet, under the direction of Serge de Diaghilew, has been presenting operas and ballets in the European capitals, notably in London and Paris for long seasons each summer (the Ballet has been seen in America since this article was written). A number of artists and a number of stage directors have been working together in staging these works, which, as a whole, may be conceded to be the most completely satisfying productions which have been made on the stage during the progress of this new movement in the theatre. One or two of the German productions, or Gordon Craig's *Hamlet* in Stanislawsky's theatre, may have surpassed them in the sterner qualities of beauty, the serious truth of their art, but none has surpassed them in brilliancy, in barbaric splendour, or in their almost

complete solution of the problems of mingling people with painted scenery. The Russians have solved these problems by a skilful (and passionately liberal) use of colour and light. The painted surfaces are mostly flat, to be sure, and crudely painted, but the tones of the canvas are so divinely contrived to mingle with the tones of the costumes that the effect of an animated picture is arrived at with seemingly very little pother. This method of staging is not, in most instances, it must be admitted, adapted to the requirements of the Wagner dramas. Bakst, I imagine, would find it difficult to cramp his talents in the field of Wagnerism, though he should turn out a very pretty edition of *Das Rheingold*. Roerich, on the other hand, who designed the scenery and costumes for *Prince Igor* as it was presented in Paris and London in the summer of 1914, would find no difficulty in staging *Götterdämmerung*. The problem is the same: to convey an impression of barbarism and strength. One scene I remember in Borodine's opera in which an open window, exposing only a clear stretch of sky — the rectangular opening occupied half of the wall at the back of the room — was made to act the drama. A few red lights skilfully played on the curtain representing the sky made it seem as if in truth a city were burning

and I thought how a similar simple contrivance might make a more imaginative final scene for *Götterdämmerung.*

It is, however, in their handling of mechanical problems that the Russians could assist the new producer of the Wagner dramas to his greatest advantage. In Rimsky-Korsakow's opera, *The Golden Cock,* for instance, the bird of the title has several appearances to make. Now there was no attempt made, in the Russians' stage version of this work, to have this bird jiggle along a supposedly invisible wire, in reality quite visible, flapping his artificial wings and wiggling his insecure feet, as in the usual productions of *Siegfried.* Instead the bird was built solid like a bronze cock for a drawing room table; he did not flap his wings; his feet were motionless; when the action of the drama demanded his presence he was let down on a wire; there was no pretence of a lack of machinery. The effect, however, was vastly more imaginative and diverting than that in *Siegfried,* because it was more simple. In like manner King Dodon, in the same opera, mounted a wooden horse on wheels to go to the wars, and the animals he captured were also made of wood, studded with brilliant beads. In Richard Strauss's ballet, *The Legend of Joseph,* the figure of the guardian angel

was not let down on a wire from the flies as he might have been in a Drury Lane pantomime; the naïve nature of the work was preserved by his nonchalant entrance across the *loggia* and down a flight of steps, exactly the entrance of all the human characters of the ballet. I do not mean to suggest that these particular expedients would fit into the Wagner dramas so well as they do into works of a widely different nature. They should, however, indicate to stage directors the possibility of finding a method to suit the case in each instance. And I do assert, without hope or fear of contradiction, that Brünnhilde with a wooden horse would challenge less laughter than she does with the sorry nags which are put at her disposal and which Siegfried later takes down the river with him. It is only down the river that one can sell such horses. As for the bird, there are bird trainers whose business it is to teach pigeons to fly from pillar to post in the music-halls; their services might be contracted for to make that passage in *Siegfried* a little less distracting. The difficulties connected with this particular mechanical episode (and a hundred others) might be avoided by a different lighting of the scene. If the tree-tops of the forest were submerged in the deepest shadows, as well they might be, the flight of the

bird on a wire might be accomplished with some sort of illusion. But why should one see the bird at all? One hears it constantly as it warbles advice to the hero.

The new Wagner producer must possess many qualities if he wishes to place these works on a plane where they may continue to challenge the admiration of the world. Wagner himself was more concerned with his ideals than he was with their practical solution. Besides, it must be admitted that taste in stage art and improvements in stage mechanism have made great strides in the last decade. The plaster wall, for instance, which has replaced in many foreign theatres the flapping, swaying, wrinkled, painted canvas sky cyclorama (still in use at the Metropolitan Opera House; a vast sum was paid for it a few years ago) is a new invention and one which, when appropriately lighted, perfectly counterfeits the appearance of the sky in its different moods. (So far as I know the only theatre in New York with this apparatus is the Neighborhood Playhouse on Grand Street.) In Houston Stewart Chamberlain's "Richard Wagner," published in 1897, I find the following:

"Wagner foresaw that in the new drama the whole principle of the stage scenery must undergo a complete alteration but did not particularize in

detail. The *Meister* says that 'music resolves the rigid immovable groundwork of the scenery into a liquid, yielding, ethereal surface, capable of receiving impressions'; but to prevent a painful conflict between what is seen and what is heard, the stage picture, too, must be relieved from the curse of rigidity which now rests upon it. The only way of doing this is by managing the light in a manner which its importance deserves, that its office may no longer be confined to illuminating painted walls. . . . I am convinced that the next great advance in the drama will be of this nature, in the art of the eye, and not in music." (The passage quoted further refers to Appia's first book, published in French. Chamberlain was a close friend of Appia and "Die Musik und die Inscenierung" is dedicated to him.)

It must also be understood that Wagner in some instances, when the right medium of his expression was clear to him, made concessions to what he considered the unintelligence of the public. Wotan's waving of the sword is a case in point. The *motiv* without the object he did not think would carry out the effect he intended to convey, although the absurdity of Wotan's founding his new humanity on the power of the degenerate giants must have been apparent to him. Sometimes the Master

changed his mind. Paris would have none of *Tannhäuser* without a ballet and so Wagner rewrote the first act and now the Paris version of the opera is the accepted one. In any case it must be apparent that what Wagner wanted was a fusion of the arts, and a completely artistic one. So that if any one can think of a better way of presenting his dramas than one based on the very halting staging which he himself devised (with the limited means at his command) as perhaps the best possible to exploit his ideals, that person should be hailed as Wagner's friend. It must be seen, at any current presentation of his dramas, that his way, or Cosima's, is not the best way. The single performances which have made the deepest impression on the public have deviated the farthest from tradition. Olive Fremstad's Isolde was far from traditional. Her very costume of deep green was a flaunt in the face of Wagner's conventionally white robed heroine. In the first act, after taking the love-potion, she did not indulge in any of the swimming movements usually employed by sopranos to pass the time away until the occasion came to sing again. She stood as a woman dazed, passing her hands futilely before her eyes, and it was to be noted that in some instances her action had its supplement in the action of the tenor who

was singing with her, although, in other instances, he would continue to swim in the most highly approved Bayreuth fashion. But Olive Fremstad, artist that she was, could not completely divorce herself from tradition; in some cases she held to it against her judgment. The stage directions for the second act of *Parsifal*, for example, require Kundry to lie on her couch, tempting the hero, for a very long time. Great as Fremstad's Kundry was, it might have been improved if she had allowed herself to move more freely along the lines that her artistic conscience dictated. Her Elsa was a beautiful example of the moulding of the traditional playing of a rôle into a picturesque, imaginative figure, a feat similar to that which Mary Garden accomplished in her delineation of Marguerite in *Faust*. Mme. Fremstad always sang Brünnhilde in *Götterdämmerung* throughout with the fire of genius. This was surely some wild creature, a figure of Greek tragedy, a Norse Elektra. The superb effect she wrought, at her first performance in the rôle, with the scene of the spear, was never tarnished in subsequent performances. The thrill was always there.

In face of acting and singing like that one can afford to ignore Wagner's theory about the wedding of the arts. A Fremstad or a Lehmann can

carry a Wagner drama to a triumphant conclusion with few, if any, accessories, but great singing artists are rare; nor does a performance of this kind meet the requirements of the Wagner ideal, in which the picture, the word, and the tone shall all be a part of the drama (*Wort-Tondrama*). Wagner invented a new form of stage art but only in a small measure did he succeed in perfecting a method for its successful presentation. The artist-producer must arise to repair this deficiency, to become the dominating force in future performances, to see that the scenes are painted in accordance with the principles of beauty and dramatic fitness, to see that they are lighted to express the secrets of the drama, as Appia says they should be, to see that the action is sympathetic with the decoration, and that the decoration never encumbers the action, that the lighting assists both. There never has been a production of the *Ring* which has in any sense realized its true possibilities, the ideal of Wagner.

June 24, 1915.

The Bridge Burners

"Zieh'hin! ich kann dich nicht halten!"
Der Wanderer.

The Bridge Burners

I

IT is from the enemy that one learns. Richelieu and other great men have found it folly to listen to the advice of friends when rancour, hatred, and jealousy inspired much more helpful suggestions. And it occurred to me recently that the friends of modern music were doing nothing by way of describing it. They are content to like it. I must confess that I have been one of these. I have heard first performances of works by Richard Strauss and Claude Debussy on occasions when the programme notes gave one cause for dread. At these times I have often been pleasurably excited and I have never lacked for at least a measured form of enjoyment except when I found those gods growing a bit old. The English critics were right when they labelled *The Legend of Joseph* Handelian. The latest recital of Leo Ornstein's which I heard made me realize that even the extreme modern music evidently protrudes no great perplexities into my ears. They accept it all, a good deal of it with avidity, some with the real tribute of astonishment which goes only to genius.

On the whole, I think, I should have found it im-

possible to write this article which, with a new light shining on my paper, is dancing from under my darting typewriter keys, if I had not stumbled by good luck into the camp of the enemy. For I find misunderstanding, lack of sympathy, and enmity towards the new music to a certain degree inspirational. These qualities, projected, have crystallized impressions in my mind, which might, under other circumstances, have remained vague and, in a sense, I think I may make bold to say, they have made it possible for me to synthesize to a greater degree than has hitherto been attempted, the various stimuli and progressive gestures of modern music. I can more clearly say now *why* I like it. (If I were to tell others how to like it I should be forced to resort to a single sentence: "Open your ears".)

A good deal of this new insight has come to me through assiduous perusal of Mr. Richard Aldrich's comment on musical doings in the columns of the "New York Times." Mr. Aldrich, like many another, has been bewildered and annoyed by a good deal of the modern music played (Heaven knows that there is little enough modern music played in New York. Up to date [April 16, 1916] there has been nothing of Arnold Schoenberg performed this season later than his *Pelléas*

und Mélisande and his *Kammersymphonie;* of Strawinsky — aside from the three slight pieces for string quartet — nothing later than *Petrouchka.* Such new works as John Alden Carpenter's *Adventures in a Perambulator* and Enrique Granados's *Goyescas* — as an opera — do not seriously overtax the critical ear) but he has done more than some others by way of expressing the causes of this bewilderment and this annoyance. Some critics neglect the subject altogether but Mr. Aldrich at least attempts to be explanatory. My first excerpt from his writings is clipped from an article in the "New York Times" of December 5, 1915, devoted to the string quartet music of Strawinsky, performed by the Flonzaleys at Æolian Hall in New York on the evening of November 30:

"So far as this particular type of 'futurist' music is concerned it seems to be conditioned on an accompaniment of something else to explain it from beginning to end."

Is this a reproach? The context would seem to indicate that it is. If so it seems a late date in which to hurl anathema at programme music. One would have fancied that that battle had already been fought and won by Ernest Newman, Frederick Niecks, and Lawrence Gilman, to name

a few of the gladiators for the cause. Why Mr. Aldrich, having swallowed whole, so to speak, the tendency of music during a century of its development, should suddenly balk at music which requires explanation I cannot imagine. However, this would seem to be the point he makes in face of the fact that at least two-thirds of a symphony society's programme is made up of programme music. Berlioz said in the preface to his *Symphonie Fantastique*, " The plan of an instrumental drama, being without words, requires to be explained beforehand. The programme (which is indispensable to the perfect comprehension of the dramatic plan of the work) ought therefor to be considered in the light of the spoken text of an opera, serving to . . . indicate the character and expression." Ernest Newman built up an elaborate theory on these two sentences, a theory fully expounded in an article called " Programme Music " published in " Music Studies " (1905), and touched on elsewhere in his work (at some length, of course, in his " Richard Strauss." He brings out the facts. Representation of natural sounds, emotions, and even objects — or attempts at it — in early music were not rare. He cites the justly famous *Bible Sonatas* of Kuhnau, Rameau's *Sighs* and *Tender Plants*, Dittersdorf's twelve programme sym-

phonies illustrating Ovid's *Metamorphoses*, and John Sebastian Bach's *Capriccio on the Departure of my Dearly Beloved Brother.* Beethoven wrote a *Pastoral Symphony* in which he attempted to imitate the sound of a brook and the call of a cuckoo. There is also a storm in this symphony. The fact that Beethoven denied any intention of portraying anything but "pure emotion" in this symphony is evasion and humbug as Newman very clearly points out. From what do these emotions arise? The answer is, From the contemplation of country scenes. The auditor without a programme will not find the symphony so enjoyable as the one who *knows* what awakened the emotions in the composer. Beethoven wrote a "battle" symphony too, a particularly bad one, I believe (I have never seen it announced for performance). It is true, however, that most of the composers of the "great" period were content to number their symphonies and to call their piano pieces impromptus, sonatas, valses, and nocturnes. Nous avons changé tout cela. Schumann was one of the first of the composers of the nineteenth century to write music with titles. In the *Carneval*, for example, each piece is explained by its title. And explanations, or shadows of explanations (Cathedral, Rhenish, Spring, etc.), hover about the

four symphonies. Berlioz, of course, carried the principle of programme music to a degree that was considered absurd in his own time. He wrote symphonies like the *Romeo and Juliet* and the *Fantastique* which had to be "explained from beginning to end." Liszt invented the symphonic poem and composed pieces which are only to be listened to after one has read the poem or seen the picture which they describe. Richard Strauss rounded out the form and put the most elaborate naturalistic details into such works as *Don Quixote* and *Till Eulenspiegel*. Understanding of this music and complete enjoyment of it rely in a large measure on the "explanation." The *Symphonia Domestica* and *Heldenleben* are extreme examples of this sort of thing. What does Wagner's whole system depend on but "explanation"? How does one know that a certain sequence of notes represents a sword? Because the composer tells us so. How does one discover that another sequence of notes represents Alberich's curse? Through the same channel. Bernard Shaw says in *The Perfect Wagnerite:* "To be able to follow the music of *The Ring*, all that is necessary is to become familiar enough with the brief musical phrases out of which it is built to recognize them and attach a certain definite significance to them, exactly as any

ordinary Englishman recognizes and attaches a definite significance to the opening bars of *God Save the Queen.*" Modern music is full of this sort of thing. It leans more and more heavily on titles, on mimed drama, on "explanation." Think of almost all the music of Debussy, for example, *La Mer, l'Après-midi d'un Faune, Iberia,* nearly all the piano music; Rimsky-Korsakow's *Scheherazade, Antar,* and *Sadko* (the symphonic suite, not the opera); Vincent d'Indy's *Istar;* Borodine's *Thamar;* Dukas's *l'Apprenti Sorcier;* Franck's *Le Chasseur Maudit* and *Les Eolides;* Saint-Saëns's *Phaëton, La Jeunesse d'Hercule,* and *Le Rouet d'Omphale;* Busoni's music for *Turandot:* the list is endless and it is futile to continue it.

But, Mr. Aldrich would object, in most of these instances the music stands by itself and it is possible to enjoy it without reference to the titles. I contend that this is just as true of Strawinsky's three pieces for string quartet (of course one never will be sure because Daniel Gregory Mason explained these pieces before they were played). However Mr. Newman has already exploded a good many bombs about this particular point and he has shown the fallacy of the theory. Mr. Newman concedes that a work such as Tschaikowsky's overture *Romeo and Juliet,* would undoubtedly "give

intense pleasure to any one who listened to it as a piece of music, pure and simple. But I deny," he continues, " that this hearer would receive as much pleasure from the work as I do. He might think the passage for muted strings, for example, extremely beautiful, but he would not get from it such delight as I, who not only feel all the *musical* loveliness of the melody and the harmonies and the tone colour, but see the lovers on the balcony and breathe the very atmosphere of Shakespeare's scene. I am richer than my fellow by two or three emotions of this kind. My nature is stirred on two or three sides instead of only one. I would go further and say that not only does the auditor I have supposed get less pleasure from the work than I, but he really does not hear Tschaikowsky's work at all. If the musician writes music to a play and invents phrases to symbolize the characters and to picture the events of the play, we are simply not listening to *his* work at all if we listen to it in ignorance of his poetical scheme. We may hear the music but it is not the music he meant us to hear." And Mr. Newman goes on to berate Strauss for not providing programmes for some of his tone-poems (programmes, however, which have always been provided by somebody in authority at the eleventh hour). Niecks thinks that nearly all

music has an implied programme: "My opinion is that whenever the composer ceases to write purely formal music he passes from the domain of absolute music into that of programme music." ("Programme Music in the Last Four Centuries.") But Niecks does not hold that explanation is always necessary, even if there is a programme.

Under the circumstances it seems a bit thick to jump on Strawinsky for writing music which has to be explained. Such pieces as *Fireworks* or the *Scherzo Fantastique* need no more extended explanation than the titles give them. His three pieces for string quartet were listed without programme at the Flonzaley concert and might have been played that way, I think, without causing the heavens to fall. But Strawinsky had told some one that their general title was *Grotesques* and that he had composed each of them with a programme in mind, which was divulged. When the music was played, in the circumstances, what he was driving at was as plain as A. B. C. There was no further demand made on the auditor than that he prepare himself, as Schumann asked auditors to prepare themselves to listen to the *Carneval*, by thinking of the titles. In Strawinsky's opera, *The Nightingale*, the text of the opera

serves as the programme. There are no representative themes; there is no "working-out." You are not required to remember *leit-motive* in order to familiarize your emotions with the proper capers to cut at particular moments when these *motive* are repeated. You are asked simply to follow the course of the lyric drama with open ears, open mind, and open heart. Albert Gleizes, the post-impressionist painter, once told me that he considered the title an essential part of a picture. "It is a *pointe de depart*," he said. "In painting a picture I always have some idea or object in mind in the beginning. In my completed picture I may have wandered far away from this. Now the title gives the spectator the advantage of starting where I started." A title to a musical composition gives an auditor a similar advantage. No doubt Strawinsky's *Fireworks* would make a nice blaze without the name but the title gives us a picture to begin with, just as Wagner gives us scenery and text and action (to say nothing of a handbook of representative themes) to explain the music of *Die Walküre*. . . .

An important point has been overlooked by those who have watched painting and music develop during the past century: while painting has become less and less an attempt to represent nature, music

has more and more attempted concrete representation. There has seemed, at times, to be an interchange in progress in the values of the arts. ("He [Cézanne] is the first of the great painters to treat colour deliberately as music; he tests all its harmonic resources," Romain Rolland.) Observers of matters æsthetic have frequently told us that both of these arts were breaking with their old principles and going on to something new but, it would seem, they have failed to grasp the significance of the change. Music, as it drops its classic outline and form, the *cliché* of the studio and the academy, becomes more and more like nature, because natural sounds are not co-ordinated into symphonies with working-out sections and codas, first and second subjects, etc., while in painting, in some of its later manifestations, the resemblance to things seen has entirely disappeared. This fact, at least one phase of it, was realized in concrete form by the futurists in Italy who asserted that polyphony, fugue, etc., were contraptions of a bygone age when the stage-coach was in vogue. Machinery has changed the world. We are living in a dynasty of dynamics. A certain number of futurists even give concerts of noise machines in which a definite attempt is made to imitate the sounds of automobiles, aeroplanes, etc.

At a concert given at the Dal Verme in Milan, for example, the pieces were called *The Awakening of a Great City, A Dinner on the Kursaal Terrace* (doubtless with an imitation of the guests eating soup), and *A Meet of Automobiles and Aeroplanes.*

Picasso and Picabia have made us acquainted with a form of art which in its vague realization of representative values becomes almost as abstract an art as music was in the time of Beethoven, while such musicians as Strauss, Debussy, and Strawinsky, have gradually widened the boundaries which have confined music, and have made it at times something very concrete. Debussy's *La Mer,* for example, is a much more definite picture (in leaning over the rail of the gallery of the Salle Gaveau in Paris during a performance of this piece I actually became sea-sick!) than Marcel Duchamp's painting of the *Nu Descendant l'Escalier.* So Strawinsky's three pieces for string quartet represent certain things in nature (the first a group of peasants playing strange instruments on the steppes; the second sounds in a Cathedral heard by a drowsy worshipper, the responses of the priest, chanted out of key, the shrill antiphonal choruses; and the third a juggling Pierrot with a soul-pain) much more definitely than Picasso's latest *Nature Morte dans un Jardin.*

"Now the law which has dominated painting for more than a century is a more and more comprehensive assimilation of musical idiom. Even Delacroix spoke of 'the mysterious effects of line and colour which, alas, only a few adepts feel — like interwoven themes in music . . .' and Baudelaire, in another connection, wrote, 'Harmony, melody, and counterpoint are to be found in colour. Ingres also remarked to his disciples, 'If I could make you all musicians you would be better painters.' Renoir, who journeyed to Sicily to paint Wagner's portrait and to translate *Tannhäuser*, is a musical enthusiast and his work is music. Maurice Denis tells us that his pals at Julian's Academy, those who were to found synthesism with him, never tired of discussing Lamoureux's concerts, where they were enthusiastic habitués. Gaugin announced that 'painting is a musical phase.' He speaks continually of the music of a picture; when he wants to analyze his work he divides it into the literary element, to which he attaches less importance, and the musical element which he schemes first. Cézanne, whom Gaugin compared to César Franck, said, 'not model, but modulate.' Metzinger invokes the right of cubist painters to express all emotions as music does, and one of the æstheticians of the new school writes: 'The goal

of painting is perhaps a music of nature, visual music to which traditional painting would have somewhat the status that sacred or dramatic music has compared to concert music.'

"This, then, is the revolution in the art of line and colour which has become aware of its intrinsic power, independent of any subject. In truth, even among the Venetians, as has been well said, the subject was 'only the background upon which the painter relied to develop his harmonies,' but the mentality of spectators clings to this background as to the libretto of an opera. At present, an end to librettos: Pure music: those who wish to comprehend it must first of all master its idiom, for 'Colour is learned as music is.'" (Romain Rolland: "The Unbroken Chain," Lee Simonson's translation.)

So far, in spite of the protestations of horror made by the academicians, the pedants, and the Philistines, which would lead one to suppose a state of complete chaos, there has not been a complete abandonment of co-ordination, of selection, or of intention, in either art. In fact, it seems to me, that the qualities of intention and selection are more powerful adjuncts of the artist than they have been for many generations. In painting colour and form are cunningly contrived to give

us an idea, if not a photograph, and in music natural (as well as unnatural) sounds are still arranged, perhaps to a more extreme extent than ever before.

II

I wonder if all the suggestion music gives us is associative. Sometimes I think so. Was it Berlioz who remarked that the slightest quickening of *tempo* would transform the celebrated air in *Orphée* from "*J'ai perdu mon Euridice*" to "*J'ai trouvé mon Euridice*"? Rossini found an overture which he had formerly used for a tragedy quite suitable for *Il Barbiere di Siviglia*, and the interchangeable values which Handel gave to secular and sacred tunes are familiar to all music students. Are minor keys really sad? Are major keys always suggestive of joy? We know that this is not true although one will be more sure of a ready response of tears from a Western audience by resorting to a minor key. In our music wedding marches are usually in the major and funeral marches usually in the minor modes. But almost all Eastern music is in a minor key, love songs and even cradle songs. Recall, or play over on your piano, the Smyrnan lullaby (made familiar by Mme. Sembrich) which occurs in the collection of

Grecian and oriental melodies edited by L. A. Bourgault-Ducoudray. . . . Even the composers who do not call their pieces by name and who scorn the use of a programme, depend for some of their most powerful effects on emotion created by association . . . and a new composer, be he indefatigable enough, can rouse new associations in us. . . . Why if three or four composers would meet together and decide that the use of a certain group of notes stood for the town pump, in time it would be quite easy for other composers to use this phrase in that connection *with no explanation whatever.*

III

"It is a mistake of much popular criticism," says Walter Pater, in the first two sentences of his essay on "The School of Giorgione," "to regard poetry, music, and painting — all the various products of art — as but translations into different languages of one and the same fixed quantity of imaginative thought, supplemented by certain technical qualities of colour, in painting; of sound, in music; of rhythmical words, in poetry. In this way, the sensuous element in art, and with it almost everything in art that is essentially artistic, is made a matter of indifference; and a clear ap-

prehension of the opposite principle — that the sensuous material of each art brings with it a special phase or quality of beauty, untranslatable into the forms of any other, an order of impressions distinct in kind — is the beginning of all true æsthetic criticism."

Strawinsky, in a sense, is quite done with programme music; at least he says that this is so. "La musique est trop bête pour exprimer autre chose que la musique" is his pregnant phrase, which I cannot quote often enough. And in an interview with Stanley Wise, which appeared in the columns of the "New York Tribune" he further says, "Programme music . . . has been obviously discontinued as being distinctly an uncouth form which already has had its day; but music, nevertheless, still drags out its life in accordance with these false notions and conceptions. Without absolutely defying the programme, musicians still draw upon sources foreign to their art. . . . The true inwardness of music being purely acoustic, the art so expresses itself without being concerned with feelings alien to its nature. . . . Music in the theatre is still held in bondage to other elements. Wagner, in particular, is responsible for this servitude in which music labours to-day."

The greater part of Igor Strawinsky's music, up to date, is written to a programme, but these remarks of the composer should not be incomprehensible on that account. Somewhat later than the performance of the three pieces for string quartet, *The Firebird* and *Petrouchka* were performed in New York and were hailed by the critics, *en masse*, as most delightful works. But the music depends for its success, they said, on the stage action to explain it. I fancy this is true of many operas which were written for the stage. *Siegfried*, as a whole, would be pretty tiresome in concert form and so would *La Fille du Regiment*. And read what Henry Fothergill Chorley has to say about the works of Gluck ("Modern German Music"): "The most experienced and imaginative of readers will derive from the closest perusal of the scores of Gluck's operas, feeble and distant impressions of their power and beauty. The delicious charm of Mozart's melody — the expressive nobility of Handel's ideas — may in some measure be comprehended by the student at the pianoforte and the eye may assure the reader how masterly is the symmetry of the vocal score with one,— how rich and complete is the management of the instrumental score, with the other master. But this is in no respect the case with *Alceste*, the two

Iphigénies and *Armide* — it may be added, with almost any opera written according to the canons of French taste. That which appears thin, bald, severe, when it is merely perused, is filled up, brightens, enchants, excites, and satisfies, when it is heard with action,— to a degree only to be believed upon experience. Out of the theatre, three-fourths of Gluck's individual merit is lost. He wrote for the stage." That all this is true any one who, like me, has taken the trouble to study the scores of the Gluck operas, which are infrequently performed, may have discovered for himself. I have never heard *Alceste* and that lyric drama, as a result, has never sprung to me from the printed page as do the notes of *Orphée*, *Armide*, and *Iphigénie en Tauride*. I am convinced of the depth of expression contained in its pages; I am certain of its noble power, but only because I have had a similar experience with other Gluck music dramas, with which I have later become acquainted in the theatre.

This theory in regard to *Petrouchka* and *The Firebird* may be easily contradicted, however. One listener told me that she got the complete picture of the Russian fair by closing her eyes; it was all in the music. The action, as a matter of fact, she added, annoyed her. It is quite certain that

the music of either of these works is delightful when played on the piano; an average roomful of people who like to listen to music will be charmed with it. *The Sacrifice to the Spring* was hissed intolerantly when it was performed as a ballet in Paris but, later (April 5, 1914), when Pierre Monteux gave an orchestral performance of the work at a concert it was applauded as violently.

Strawinsky has, it is true, worked away from *representation* (in the sense of copying nature or, like Wagner, relying on literary formulas for his effects) in his music, but he has written very little that does not depend on a programme, either expressed or implied. All songs of course are "explained" by their lyrics. The *Scherzo Fantastique* and *Fireworks* are programme music in the lighter sense, and naturally the music of his ballets and his opera depends for its meaning on the stage action. What Strawinsky means to do, I think — certainly what he has done — is to avoid going outside his subject or requiring his listener to do so. To understand the music of his opera you need never have heard a real nightingale sing, for the bird does not sing at all like a nightingale, a fact which was not understood by the critics when the work was first produced, and in *The Sacrifice to the Spring* you will find no attempt

made to ape natural sounds, although there was ample opportunity for doing so. . . . Another modern worker in tone, Leo Ornstein, in the accompaniment to his cradle song (it is the same *wiegenlied* set by Richard Strauss, by the way) tries to give his hearers the mother's overtones, her thoughts about the child's future, etc.; the music, instead of attempting to express the exact meaning of the poem, expresses *more* than the poem.

And Mr. Ornstein once said to me, "What I try to do in composing is to get underneath, to express the feeling underneath — not to be photographic. I do not think it is art to reproduce a steam whistle but it is art to give the feeling that the steam whistle gives us. That can never be done by exact reproduction. . . . I should not like a steam whistle introduced into the concert room" (I had shamelessly suggested it) ". . . but great, smashing chords. . . ."

Yet Mr. Ornstein in his *Impressions of the Thames* is as near actual representation as Whistler or Monet . . . certainly a musical impressionist.

Is anything true? I hope not. At dinner the other evening a lady attempted to prove to me that there were standards by which beauty could be

judged and rules by which it could be constructed. She was unsuccessful.

IV

It has occurred to me that Mr. Aldrich meant that he wanted the juxtaposition of notes explained from beginning to end. Inspiration is not always conscious . . . one feels in the end whether such a collocation is inevitable or not . . . I wonder if Beethoven could have explained one of his last quartets or piano sonatas. I doubt it. Of course, on the other hand, Wagner explained and explained and explained.

V

I am afraid that this quality alone, the fact that the music needs explanation, is not the rock on which Mr. Aldrich splits, so to speak. He writes somewhere else in this same article: "All he asks of his listeners is to forget all they know about string quartet music." Now this is really too much. That is exactly what Strawinsky does, and why shouldn't he? Has not every great composer done as much? To quote Ernest Newman again (this time from his book "Richard

Strauss"), "All the music of the giants of the past expresses no more than a fragment of what music can and some day will express. With each new generation it must discover and reveal some new secret of the universe and of man's heart; and as the thing uttered varies, the way of uttering it must vary also. There is only one rational definition of good 'form' in music — that which expresses most succinctly and most perfectly the state of soul in which the idea originated; and as moods and ideas change, so must forms." "The true creator strives, in reality, after *perfection* only," writes Busoni, in "A New Æsthetic of Music," "and through bringing this into harmony with *his own* individuality, a new law arises without premeditation." The very greatness of Beethoven is due to the fact that he made a perfect wedding of form and idea. His forms (in which he broke with tradition in several important points) were evolved out of his ideas. Now the very writers who give Beethoven the credit for having accomplished this successful revolution and who write enthusiastically of Gluck's "reform of the opera," object to any contemporary instances of this spirit (Maurice Ravel "corrects" with great care, I am told, the exercises of his pupils. "He who breaks rules must first know them," he

says. And I have no disposition to quarrel with this sort of reverence although I think it is sometimes carried too far. However the critic attempts to "correct" the finished pupil's work, from the work of the past — a sad and impossible task). Why in the name of goodness should not Strawinsky, or any other modern composer, for that matter, be allowed to make us forget everything we know about string quartets, if he is able? Some of us would be grateful for the sensation. Leo Ornstein in a recent article said, "The very first step which the composer must be given the privilege of insisting upon is that his listeners should approach his work with no preconceived notions of any kind; they must learn to allow absolute and full freedom to their imaginations as it is only under such circumstances that any new work can be understood and appreciated at first. All preconceived theories must be abolished, and the new work approached through no formulas." And in the same article Mr. Ornstein relates how, after he had played his *Wild Men's Dance* to Leschetizky that worthy pedagogue murmured, amazed, "How in the world did you get all those notes on paper!" That, unfortunately, concludes Mr. Ornstein, is the attitude of the average listener to modern music. A similar instance is

related in the case of Strawinsky. He played some measures of his ballet, *The Firebird,* on the piano to his master, Rimsky-Korsakow, until the composer of *Scheherazade* interposed, "Stop playing that horrid thing; otherwise I might begin to enjoy it." And even the usually open-minded James Huneker says in his essay on Arnold Schoenberg ("Ivory, Apes, and Peacocks"), "If such music-making is ever to become accepted, then I long for Death the Releaser. More shocking still would be the suspicion that in time I might be persuaded to like this music, to embrace, after abhorring it." These phrases of Huneker's remind me of a personal incident. My father has subscribed for the "Atlantic Monthly" since the first issue and one of the earliest memories of my childhood is connected with the inevitable copy which always lay on the library table. On one occasion, contemplating it, I burst into tears; nor could I be comforted. My explanation, between sobs, was, "Some day I'll grow up and like a magazine without pictures! I can't bear to think of it!" Well, there is many a man who weeps because some day he may grow up to like music without melody! Music *has* changed; of that there can be no doubt. Don't go to a concert and expect to hear what you might have heard fifty years

ago; don't expect *anything* and don't hate yourself if you happen to like what you hear. Mr. George Moore's evidence on this point of receptiveness is enlightening (Mr. George Moore who spoke to me once of the "vulgar noises made by the Russian Ballet"): "In *Petrouchka* the orchestra all began playing in different keys and when it came out into one key I was quite dazed. I don't know whether it is music but I rather liked it!"

Still another point is raised by Mr. Aldrich. I quote from the "New York Times" of December 8, 1915; the reference is to the second string quartet of David Stanley Smith, played by the Kneisel Quartet (the italics are mine): "Mr. Smith does not hesitate at drastic dissonance *when it results from the leading of his part writing.*" There at last we have the real nigger in the woodpile. The relation between keys is so remote, the tonalities are so inexplicable in a modern Strawinsky or Schoenberg work that the brain, prepared with a list of scales, refuses to take in the natural impression that the ear receives. This sort of criticism reminds me of a line which is quoted from some London journal by William Wallace in "The Threshold of Music," "The whole work is singularly lacking in contrapuntal interest and depends solely for such effect as it achieves

upon certain emotional impressions of harmony and colour." And, nearer home, I culled the following from the "New York Sun" of December 12, 1915 (Mr. W. J. Henderson's column), "This is what is the matter with the futurists or post-impressionists in music. They are tone colourists and that is all." (Amusingly enough Mr. Henderson begins his remarks by praising Joseph Pennell for writing an article in which the post-impressionist painters were given a drubbing; this article is treated with contumely and scorn by the art critic of the "Sun" on the page opposite that on which Mr. Henderson's article appears.) In all these cases you find men complaining because a composer has done exactly what he started out to do. F. Balilla Pratella in one of his futurist manifestos discusses this point (the translation is my own), "The fugue, a composition based on counterpoint par excellence, is full of (such) artifices even when it achieves its artistic balance in the works of the great German Sebastian Bach. Soul, intellectuality, and instinct are here fused in a given form, in a given manifestation of art, an art of its own times, historical and strictly connected with the life, faith, and culture of that particular period. Why then should we be compelled or asked to live it over again at the distance of

several centuries?" And later, "We proclaim as an essential principle of our futurist revolution that counterpoint and fugue, stupidly considered as one of the most important branches of musical learning, are in our eyes only the ruins of the old science of polyphony which extends from the Flemish school to Bach. We replace them by harmonic polyphony, logical fusion of counterpoint and harmony, which allows musicians to escape the needless difficulty of dividing their efforts in two opposing cultures, one dead and the other contemporary, and entirely irreconcilable, because they are the fruits of two different sensibilities." To quote Busoni; again: "How important, indeed, are 'Third,' 'Fifth,' and 'Octave'! How strictly we divide 'consonances' from 'dissonances'—*in a sphere where no dissonances can possibly exist!*" When Bernard Shaw published "The Perfect Wagnerite" he wrote for a public which still considered Wagner a little in advance of the contemporary in music. What did he say? "My second encouragement is addressed to modest citizens who may suppose themselves to be disqualified from enjoying *The Ring* by their technical ignorance of music. They may dismiss all such misgivings speedily and confidently. If the sound of music has any power to move them they

will find that Wagner exacts nothing further. There is not a single bar of 'classical music' in *The Ring* — not a note in it that has any other point than the single direct point of giving musical expression to the drama. In classical music there are, as the analytical programmes tell us, first subjects and second subjects, free fantasias, recapitulations, and codas; there are fugues, with counter-subjects, strettos, and pedal points; there are passacaglias on ground basses, canons and hypodiapente, and other ingenuities, which have, after all, stood or fallen by their prettiness as much as the simplest folk-tune. Wagner is never driving at anything of this sort any more than Shakespeare in his plays is driving at such ingenuities of verse-making as sonnets, triolets, and the like. And this is why he is so easy for the natural musician who has had no academic teaching. The professors, when Wagner's music is played to them, exclaim at once, 'What is this? Is it aria, or recitative? Is there no cabeletta to it — not even a full close? Why was that discord not prepared; and why does he not resolve it correctly? How dare he indulge in those scandalous and illicit transitions into a key that has not one note in common with the key he has just left? Listen to those false relations. What does he

want with six drums and eight horns when Mozart worked miracles with two of each? The man is no musician.' The layman neither knows nor cares about any of these things. It is the adept musician of the old school who has everything to unlearn; and I leave him, unpitied, to his fate." All Wagner asked his contemporaries to do, in fact, was to forget all they knew about opera!

VI

This piling up of Shaw on Huneker, these dips into Newman and Niecks, are beginning to be formidable, but one never knows what turn of the road may lead the traveller to his promised land and it is better to draw the map clearly even if there be a confusion of choices. And so, just here, I beg leave to make a tiny digression, to point out that the new music is not so terrible as all this explanation may have made it seem to be. Granville Bantock talks learnedly of "horizontal counterpoint" but his music is perfectly comprehensible. Schoenberg writes of "passing notes," says there is no such thing as consonance and dissonance, and "I have not been able to discover any principles of harmony. Sincerity, self-expression, is all that the artist needs, and he should

say only what he must say" but Mr. Huneker points out that he has founded an order out of his chaos, "that his madness is very methodical. For one thing he abuses the interval of the fourth and he enjoys juggling with the chord of the ninth. Vagabond harmonies, in which the remotest keys lovingly hold hands do not prevent the sensation of a central tonality somewhere — in the cellar, on the roof, in the gutter, up in the sky." Percy Grainger says he dreams of "beatless" music without rhythm — at least academically speaking — but he certainly does not write it. F. Balilla Pratella writes pages condemning dance rhythms and still more pages elaborating a new theory for marking time (which, I admit, is absolutely incomprehensible to me) and publishes them as a preface to his *Musica Futurista* (Bologna, 1912), a composition for orchestra, which is written, in spite of the theories, and the fantastic time signatures, in the most engaging dance rhythms. Nor does his disregard for fugue go so far as to make him unfriendly to scale; the whole-tone scale prevails in this work. His dislike for polyphony seems more sincere; there is a great deal of homophonous effect. Leo Ornstein has admitted to me that his "system" would be fully understood in a decade or two. As for

Strawinsky . . . how the public joyfully and rapturously takes to its heart his dissonances, and even asks for more!

VII

Vincent d'Indy, reported by Marcel Duchamp, said recently that the philosophy of music is twenty years behind that of the other arts.

VIII

The fact that Schoenberg has written a handbook of theory, explaining, after a fashion, his method of composition has misled some people. "Schoenberg is a learned musician," writes Mr. Aldrich ("New York Times," December 5, 1915), "and his music is built up by processes derived from methods handed down to the present by the learned of the past, however widely the results may depart from those hitherto accepted. . . . There results what he chooses to consider 'harmony,' the outcome of a deliberate system, about which he theorizes and *has written a book*" (the italics again are mine). Against this train of reasoning (further on in the same article it becomes evident that Mr. Aldrich is annoyed with Strawinsky because he has not done

likewise) it is pleasant to place the following paragraph from Chorley's "Modern German Music": "Mozart, it will be recollected, totally and (for him) seriously, declined to criticize himself and confess his habits of composition. Many men have produced great works of art who have never cultivated æsthetic conversation: nay, more, who have shrunk with a secretly entertained dislike from those indefatigable persons whose fancy it is 'to peep and botanize' in every corner of faëry land. It cannot be said that the analytical spirit of the circle of Weimar, when Goethe was its master-spirit did any great things for Music." Do not misunderstand Strawinsky's silence (which has only been relative, after all). It is sometimes as well to compose as to theorize. Some of the great composers have let us see into their workshops (not that they have all consistently followed out their own theories) and others have not. In one pregnant paragraph Strawinsky has expressed himself (he is speaking of *The Nightingale*): "I want to suggest neither situations nor emotions, but simply to manifest, to express them. I think there is in what are called 'impressionist' methods" ("Mr. Strawinsky, on the other hand, is a musical impressionist from the start": R. A. again) "a certain amount of

hypocrisy, or at least a tendency towards vagueness and ambiguity. That I shun above all things, and that, perhaps, is the reason why my methods differ as much from those of the impressionists as they differ from academic conventional methods. Though I often find it extremely hard to do so, I always aim at straightforward expression in its simplest form. I have no use for 'working-out' in dramatic or lyric music. The one essential thing is to feel and to convey one's feelings."

This idea of natural expression becomes associated in any great composer's mind with another idea, the horror of the *cliché*. Each new giant desires to express himself without resorting to the thousand and one formulas which have been more or less in use since the "golden age" of music (whenever that was). Natural expression implies to a certain extent the abandonment of the *cliché*, for, under this principle, if a rule or a habit is weighed and found wanting it is immediately discarded.

"Routine (*cliché*) is highly esteemed and frequently required; in musical 'officialdom' it is a *sine qua non*," writes Busoni. "That routine in music should exist at all, and furthermore that it can be nominated as a condition in the musi-

cian's bond, is another proof of the narrow confines of our musical art. Routine signifies the acquisition of a modicum of experience and art craft, and their application to all cases which may occur; hence, there must be an astounding number of analogous cases. Now I like to imagine a species of art-praxis wherein each case should be a new one, an exception." Even so early a composer (using early in a loose sense) as Schumann found it unnecessary, at times, to close a piece with the tonic; and many other composers have disregarded the rule since, leaving the ear hanging in the air, so to speak. Is there any more reason why all pieces should end on the tonic than that all books should end happily or all pictures be painted in black and white? In music which Mozart wrote at the age of four there are chords of the second (and they occur in music before Mozart). In books of the period you can read of the horror with which ears at the beginning of the nineteenth century received consecutive fifths. Some of the modern French composers have disposed of the *cliché* of a symphony in four movements. Chausson, Franck, and Dukas have written symphonies in three parts. What composer (even the most academic) ever followed the letter of a precept if he found a better way

of expressing himself? Moussorgsky avoided *cliché* as he would have avoided the plague. He took all the short cuts possible. There are no preambles and addendas, or other doddering concessions to scientific art in his music dramas and his songs. He gives the words their natural accent and the voice its natural inflections. Death is not always rewarded with blows on the big drum. The composer sometimes expresses the end, quite simply, in silence. In all the arts the horror of *cliché* asserts itself so violently indeed that we find Robert Ross ("Masks and Phases") assailing Walter Pater for such a fall from grace as the use of the phrase, "rebellious masses of black hair." Of course some small souls are so busy defying *cliché*, with no adequate reason for doing so, that they make themselves ridiculous. And as an example of this preoccupation I may tell an anecdote related to me by George Moore. "For a time," he said, "Augusta Holmès was interested in an opera she was composing, *La Montagne Noire*, to the exclusion of all other subjects in conversation. She talked about it constantly and always brought one point forward: all the characters were to sing with their backs to the audience. That was her novel idea. She did not seem to realize that, in

itself, the innovation would not serve to make her opera interesting." Strawinsky's horror of *cliché* is by no means abnormal. He does not break rules merely for the pleasure of shocking the pedants. In each instance he has developed, quite naturally and inevitably, the form out of his material. In *Petrouchka*, a ballet with a Russian country fair as its background, he has harped on the folk-dance tunes, the hurdy-gurdy manner, and, as befits this work, there is no great break with tradition, except in the orchestration. *The Firebird*, too, in spite of its fantasy and brilliance, is perfectly understandable in terms of the chromatic scale. In *The Sacrifice to the Spring*, on the other hand, unhampered by the chains which a "story-ballet" (the fable of these "pictures of pagan Russia" is entirely negligible) inevitably imply, he has awakened primitive emotions by the use of barbaric rhythm, without any special regard for melody or harmony, using the words in their academic senses. There is no attempt made to begin or end with major thirds. Strawinsky was perhaps the first composer to see that melody is of no importance in a ballet. *Fireworks* is impressionistic but it is no more so (although the result is arrived at by a wholly dissimilar method) than *La Mer* of Debussy. But it is in his opera,

The Nightingale, or his very short pieces for string quartet, or his Japanese songs for voice and small orchestra that the beast shows his fangs, so to speak. It is in these pieces and in *The Sacrifice to the Spring* that Strawinsky has accomplished a process of elision, leaving out some of those stupidities which have bored us at every concert of academic music which we have attended. (You must realize how much your mind wanders at a symphony concert. It is impossible to concentrate one's complete attention on the performance of a long work except at those times when some new phrase or some new turn in the working-out of a theme strikes the ear. There is so much of the music that is familiar, because it has occurred in so much music before. If you hear tum-ti-tum you may be certain it will be followed by ti-ti-ti and a good part of this sort of thing falls on deaf ears. . . . There are those, I am forced to admit, who can only concentrate on that which is perfectly familiar to them.) As a matter of fact he gives our ears credit (by this time!) for the ability to skip a few of the connecting links. Now this sort of elision in painting has come to be the slogan of a school. Cézanne painted a woman as he saw her; he made no attempt to explain her; that pleasure he left

for the spectator of his picture. He did not draw a fashion plate. The successors of Cézanne (some of them) have gone much farther. They draw us a few bones and expect us to reconstruct the woman, body and soul, after the fashion of a professor of anatomy reconstructing an ichthyosaurus. Strawinsky and some other modern musicians have gone as far; they have left out the tum-ti-tums and twilly-wigs which connect the pregnant phrases in their music. . . . This does not signify that they do not *think* them, sometimes, but it is not necessary for any one with a receptive ear (not an *expectant* ear, unless it be an ear which expects to hear something pleasant!) to do so. In fact this kind of an auditor appreciates these short cuts of composers, gives thanks to God for them. Surprise is one of the keenest emotions that music has in its power to give us (even Hadyn and Weber discovered that!). It is only the pedants and the critics, who, after all, do not sit through all the long symphonies, who are annoyed by these attempts at concentration and condensation. (I say the pedants but I must include the Philistines. It is really *cliché* which makes certain music "popular." The public as a whole really prefers music based on *cliché*, with a melody in which the end is fore-

ordained almost from the first bar. Of course in time public taste is changed. . . . The transition is slow . . . but the composer who follows public taste instead of leading it soon drops out of hearing. The *cliché* of to-day is not the *cliché* of day before yesterday. According to Philip Hale, Napoleon, then first consul [1800] said to Luigi Cherubini, "I am very fond of Paisiello's music; it is gentle, peaceful. You have great talent, but your accompaniments are too loud." Cherubini replied, "Citizen Consul, I have conformed to the taste of the French." Napoleon persisted, "Your music is too loud; let us talk of Paisiello's which lulls me gently." "I understand," answered Cherubini, "you prefer music that does not prevent you from dreaming of affairs of state.") Strawinsky, working gradually, not with the intention to astonish but with no fear of doing so, dropping superfluities, and all *cliché* of the studio whatsoever, arrives at a perfectly natural form of expression in his lyric drama, *The Nightingale*, in which there is no working-out or development of themes; the music is intended to comment upon, to fill with a bigger meaning, the action as it proceeds, without resorting to tricks which require mental effort on the part of the auditor. The composer does not

wish to burden him with any more mental effort than the mere listening to the piece requires and he strikes to the soul with the poignancy of his expression. (The foregoing may easily be misunderstood. It does not mean necessarily that there is no polyphony, that there are no parts leading hither and thither in the music of Strawinsky. It does not mean that dissonance has become an end in itself with this composer. It simply means that he has let his inspiration take the form natural to it and has not tried to cramp his inspiration into proscribed forms. There should be no more difficulty in understanding him than in understanding Beethoven once one arrives at listening with unbiased ears. The trouble is that too many of us have made up our minds not to listen to anything which does not conform with our own precious opinions.)

At the risk of being misunderstood by some and for the sake of making myself clearer to others I hazard a frivolous figure. Say that Wagner's formula for composition be represented by some expression; I will choose the simple proverb, "Make hay while the sun shines." Humperdinck is content to change a single detail of this formula. He says, musically speaking, "Make *wheat* while the sun shines." Richard Strauss

makes a more complete inversion. His paraphrase would suggest something like this, "Make brass while the band brays." Strawinsky, wearied of the whole business (as was Debussy before him; genius does not paraphrase) uses only two words of the formula . . . say "make" and "sun." Later even these are negligible, as each new composer makes his own laws and his own formulas. The infinity of it! In time the work of Strawinsky will establish a *cliché* to be scorned by a new generation (scorned in the sense that it will not be imitated, except by inferior men).

That his music is vibrant and beautiful we may be sure and it has happened that all of it has been appreciated by a very worth-while public. He has done what Benedetto Croce in his valuable work, "Æsthetic," demands of the artist. He has expressed himself . . . for beauty is expression. "Artists," says this writer, "while making a verbal pretence of agreeing, or yielding a feigned obedience to them, have always disregarded (these) *laws of styles.* Every true work of art has violated some established class and upset the ideas of the critics who have been obliged to enlarge the number of classes, until finally even this enlargement has proved too narrow, owing to the appearance of new works of art, which are natu-

rally followed by new scandals, new upsettings, and — new enlargements."

"It must not be forgotten," says Egon Wellesz ("Schoenberg and Beyond" in "The Musical Quarterly," Otto Kinkeldey's translation), "that in art there are no 'eternal laws' and rules. Each period of history has its own art, and the art of each period has its own rules. There are times of which one might say that every work which was not in accord with the rules was bad or amateurish. These are the times in which fixed forms exist, to which all artists hold fast, merely varying the content. Then there are periods when artists break through and shatter the old forms. The greatness of their thoughts can no longer be confined within the old limits. (Think of Beethoven's Ninth Symphony and the Symphonie Fantastique of Berlioz.) There arises a category of art works whose power and beauty can be *felt* only and not *understood.* For this reason an audience that knows nothing of rules will enthuse over works of this kind much sooner than the average musician who looks for the rules and their observance."

Remember that Hanslick called *Tristan und Isolde* "an abomination of sense and language" and Chorley wrote "I have never been so blanked, pained, wearied, *insulted* even (the word is not too

strong), by a work of pretension as by . . . *Tannhäuser*." . . . "Fortunately," I quote Benedetto Croce again, "no arduous remarks are necessary to convince ourself that pictures, poetry, and every work of art, produce no effects save on souls prepared to receive them."

The clock continues to make its hands go round, so fast indeed that it becomes increasingly difficult to keep track of its course. For example, just before his death, John F. Runciman in "Another Ode to Discord" ("The New Music Review," April, 1916) seemed to present an entirely new front. Here is a sample passage, "We have grown used to dissonances and our ears no longer require the momentary rest afforded by frequent concords; if a discord neither demands preparation nor resolution, and if it sounds beautiful and is expressive, there is no reason on earth why a piece of music should not consist wholly of a series of discords. . . . From Monteverde to Scriabine the line is unbroken, each successive generation growing bolder in attacking dissonances and still bolder in the manner of quitting them. I heard a gentleman give a recital of his own pianoforte works not long ago. They seemed to consist entirely of minor seconds — B and C struck together — and the effect to my mind was excruciatingly

abominable. But that is how Bach's music, Beethoven's, Wagner's, struck their contemporaries; and heaven knows what we shall get accustomed to in time. One thing is certain — that the most daring modern spirit is only following in the steps of the mightiest masters. . . ."

We may be on the verge of a still greater revolution in art than any through which we have yet passed; new banners may be unfurled, and new strongholds captured. I admit that the idea gives me pleasure. Try to admit as much to yourself. Go hear the new music; listen to it and see if you can't enjoy it. Perhaps you can't. At any rate you will find in time that you won't listen to second-rate imitations of the giant works of the past any longer. Your ears will make progress in spite of you and I shouldn't wonder at all if five years more would make Schoenberg and Strawinsky and Ornstein a trifle old fashioned. . . . The Austrian already has a little of the academy dust upon him.

New York, April 16, 1916.

A New Principle in Music

A New Principle in Music

ALTHOUGH Igor Strawinsky plainly proclaimed himself a genius in *The Firebird* (1909–10), it was in *Petrouchka* (1910–11) that he began the experiment which established a new principle in music. In these "scènes burlesques" he discovered the advantages of a new use of the modern orchestra, completely upsetting the old academic ideas about "balance of tone," and proving to his own satisfaction the value of "pure tone," in the same sense that the painter speaks of pure colour. And in this work he broke away from the standards not only of Richard Strauss, the Wagner follower, but also of such innovators as Modeste Moussorgsky and Claude Debussy.

Strauss, following Wagner's theory of the *leitmotiv*, rounded out the form of the tone-poem, carried the principle of representation in music a few steps farther than his master, gave new colours to old instruments, and broadened the scope of the modern orchestra so that it might include new ones (in one of his symphonies Gustav Mahler was content with 150 men!). Moussorgsky (although his work preceded that of Strauss, the general knowledge of it is modern),

working along entirely different lines, strove for truthful utterance and achieved a mode of expression which usually seems inevitable. Debussy endowed music with novel tints derived from the extensive, and almost exclusive, use of what is called the whole-tone scale, and instead of forcing his orchestra to make more noise he constantly repressed it (in all of *Pelléas et Mélisande* there is but one climax of sound and in *L'Après midi d'un Faune* and his other orchestral works he is equally continent in the use of dynamics).

Igor Strawinsky has not been deaf to the blandishments of these composers. He has used the *leit motic* (sparingly) in both *The Firebird* and *Petrouchka*. He abandoned it in *The Sacrifice to the Spring* (1913) and in *The Nightingale* (1914). His powers of representation are as great as those of Strauss; it is only necessary to recall the music of the bird in *The Firebird*, his orchestral piece, *Fireworks*, which received warm praise from a manufacturer of pyrotechnics, and the street organ music in *Petrouchka*. Later he conceived the mission of music to be something different. "La musique est trop bête," he said once ironically, "pour exprimer autre chose que la musique." In such an extraordinary work as *The Nightingale* we find him making little or no at-

tempt at representation. The bird does not sing like the little brown warbler; instead Strawinsky has endeavoured to write music which would give the *feeling* of the bird's song and the effect it made on the people in his lyric drama to the auditors in the stalls of the opera house. As for Strauss's use of orchestral colour the German is the merest tyro when compared to the Russian. There is some use of the whole-tone scale in *The Firebird*, and elsewhere in Strawinsky, but it is not a predominant use of it. In this "conte dansé" he also suggests the *Pelléas et Mélisande* of Debussy in his continent use of sound and the mystery and esotericism of his effect. Strawinsky is more of an expert than Moussorgsky; he handles his medium more freely (has any one ever handled it better?) but he still preaches the older Russian doctrine of truth of expression, a doctrine which implies the curt dismissal of all idea of padding.

But all these composers and their contemporaries, and the composers who came before them, have one quality in common; they all use the orchestra of their time, or a bigger one. Strauss, to be sure, introduces a number of new instruments, but he still utilizes a vast number of violins and violas massed against the other instruments, diminishing in number according to the volume of

sound each makes. He divides his strings continually, of course; they do not all play alike as the violins, say, in *Il Barbiere di Siviglia,* but they often all play at once.

Strawinsky experimented at first with the full orchestra and he even utilized it in such late works as *Petrouchka* and *The Nightingale.* However, in his search for "pure tone" he used it in a new way. In *Petrouchka,* for example, infrequently you will hear more than *one of each instrument at a time* and frequently two, or at most three, instruments playing simultaneously will be sufficient to give his idea form. The entire second scene of this mimed drama, is written for solo piano, occasionally combined with a single other instrument. At other times in the action the bassoon or the cornet, even the triangle has the stage. And when he wishes to achieve his most complete effects he is careful not to use more than seven or eight instruments, and *only one of each.*

He experimented still further with this principle in his Japanese songs, for voice and small orchestra (1912). The words are by Akahito, Mazatsumi, and Tsaraiuki. I have not heard these songs with orchestral accompaniment (the piano transcription was made by the composer himself) but I may take the judgment of those

who have. I am told that they are of an indescribable beauty, and instinct with a new colour, a colour particularly adapted to the oriental naïveté of the lyrics. The orchestra, to accompany a soprano, consists of two flutes (one a little flute), two clarinets (the second a bass clarinet), piano (an instrument which Strawinsky almost invariably includes in his orchestration), two violins, viola and 'cello. This form of chamber music, of course, is not rare. Chausson's violin concerto, with chamber orchestra, and Schoenberg's *Pierrot Lunaire* instantly come to mind, but Strawinsky did not stop with chamber music. He applied his new principle to the larger forms.

In his newest work, *The Village Weddings*, which I believe Serge de Diaghilew hopes to produce, his principle has found its ultimate expression, I am told by his friend, Ernest Ansermet, conductor of the Russian Ballet in America and to whom Strawinsky dedicated his three pieces for string quartet. The last note is dry on the score of this work, and it is therefore quite possible to talk about it although no part of it has yet been performed publicly. According to Mr. Ansermet there is required an orchestra of forty-five men, each a virtuoso, *no two of whom play the same instrument* (to be sure there are two violins but

one invariably plays pizzicato, the other invariably bows). There are novelties in the band but all the conventional instruments are there including, you may be sure, a piano and an infinite variety of woodwinds, which always play significant rôles in Strawinsky's orchestration. And Mr. Ansermet says that in this work Strawinsky has achieved effects such as have only been dreamed of by composers hitherto. . . . I can well believe him.

He has made another innovation, following, in this case, an idea of Diaghilew's. When that impresario determined on a production of Rimsky-Korsakow's opera, *The Golden Cock*, during the summer of 1914 he conceived a performance with two casts, one choregraphic and the other vocal. Thus Mme. Dobrovolska sang the coloratura rôle of the Queen of Shemakhan while Mme. Karsavina danced the part most brilliantly on her toes; M. Petrov sang the rôle of King Dodon, which was enacted by Adolf Bolm, etc. In order to accomplish this feat Mr. Diaghilew was obliged to make the singers a part of the decoration. Nathalie Gontcharova, who has been called in to assist in the production of *The Village Weddings*, devised as part of her stage setting two tiers of seats, one on either side of the stage, extending

into the flies after the fashion of similar benches used at the performance of an oratorio. The singers (principals and chorus together) clad in magenta gowns and caps, all precisely similar, sat on these seats during the performance and, after a few seconds, they became quite automatically a part of the decoration. The action took place in the centre of the stage and the dancers not only mimed their rôles but also opened and closed their mouths as if they were singing. The effect was thoroughly diverting and more than one serious person was heard to declare that the future of opera had been solved, although Mme. Rimsky-Korsakow, as she had on a similar occasion when the Russian Ballet had produced Fokine's version of *Scheherazade*, protested.

Rimsky-Korsakow wrote his opera to be sung in the ordinary fashion, and, in so far as this matters, it was perhaps a desecration to perform it in any other manner. However, quite beyond the fact that very large audiences were hugely dêlighted with *The Golden Cock* in its new form, these performances served to fire Strawinsky with the inspiration for his new work. He intends *The Village Weddings* to be given precisely in this manner. It is an opera, the rôles of which are to be sung by artists who sit still while the figures

of the ballet will enact them. The words, I am told, are entirely derived from Russian folk stories and ballads, pieced together by the composer himself, and the action is to be like that of a marionette show in which the characters are worked by strings from above. It may also be stated on the same authority that the music, while embracing new tone colours and dramatic effects, is as tuneful as any yet set on paper by this extraordinary young man; the songs have a true folk flavour. The whole, it is probable, will make as enchanting a stage entertainment as any which this composer has yet contrived.

It is not only folk-tunes but popular songs as well that fascinate Igor Strawinsky. Ernest Ansermet collected literally hundreds of examples of American ragtime songs and dances to take back to the composer, and he pointed out to me how Strawinsky had used similar specimens in the past. For example, the barrel organ solo in the first scene of *Petrouchka* is a popular French song of several seasons ago, *La Jambe de Bois* (a song now forbidden in Paris); the final wedding music in *The Firebird* is an *adagio* version of a popular Russian song, with indecent words. He sees beauty in these popular tunes, too much beauty to be allowed to go to waste. In

the same spirit he has taken the melodies of two Lanner waltzes for the dance between the Ballerina and the Moor in the third scene of *Petrouchka.* It would not surprise me at all to discover *Hello Frisco* bobbing up in one of his future works. After all turn about is fair play; the popular composers have dug gold mines out of the classics.

Consistent, certainly, is Strawinsky's delight in clowns and music halls — the burlesque and the eccentric. He has written a ballet for four clowns, and Ansermet showed me one day an arrangement for four hands of three pieces, for small orchestra, in *style music hall,* dated 1914. We gave what we smilingly referred to as the "first American audition" on the grand pianoforte in his hotel room. I played the base, not a matter of any particular difficulty in the first number, a polka, because the first bar was repeated to the end. This polka, I found very amusing and we played it over several times. The valse, which followed, reminded me of the Lanner number in *Petrouchka.* The suite closed with a march, dedicated to Alfred Casella. . . . The pieces would delight any audience, from that of the Palace Theatre, to that of the concerts of the Symphony Society of New York.

New York, February 6, 1916.

Leo Ornstein

" the only true blue, genuine Futurist composer alive."
James Huneker.

Leo Ornstein

THE amazing Leo Ornstein! . . . I should have written the amazing Leo Ornsteins for "there are many of them and each one of them is one." Ornstein himself has a symbol for this diversity; some of his music he signs "Vannin." He has told me that the signature is automatic: when Vannin writes he signs; when Ornstein writes *he* signs. But it is not alone in composing that there are many Ornsteins; there are many pianists as well. One Ornstein paints his tones with a fine soft brush; the other smears on his colours with a trowel. In his sentimental treatment of triviality he has scarcely a competitor on the serious concert stage (unless it be Fanny Bloomfield-Zeisler). Is this the Caliban, one asks, who conceived and who executes *The Wild Men's Dance?* The softer Ornstein is less original than his comrade, more imitative. . . . I have been told that Jews are always imitative in art, that there are no great Jewish composers. Wagner? Well, Wagner was half a Jew, perhaps. Certainly there is imitation in Ornstein, but so was there in the young Beethoven, the young Debussy. . . .

Recently I went to hear Ornstein play under a misconception. I thought that he, with an an-

nounced violinist, was going to perform his anarchistic sonata for violin and piano, opus 31. They did perform one of his sonatas but it was an earlier opus, 26, I think. At times, while I listened it seemed to me that nothing so beautiful had been done in this form since César Franck's sonata. The first movement had a rhapsodic character that was absolutely successful in establishing a mood. The music soared; it did not seem confined at all. It achieved perfectly the effect of improvisation. The second part was even finer, and the scherzo and finale only less good. But this was no new idiom. I looked again and again at my programme; again and again at the man on the piano stool. Was this not Harold Bauer playing Ravel? . . . One theme struck me as astonishingly like Johnson's air in the last act of *The Girl of the Golden West.* There was a good use made of the whole-tone scale and its attendant harmonies, which sounded strangely in our ears a few seasons past, and a ravishing series of figurations and runs made one remember that Debussy had described falling water in a similar fashion.

This over the pianist became less himself — so far as I had become acquainted with him to this time — than ever. He played a banal barcarole

of Rubinstein's; to be sure he almost made it sound like an interesting composition; he played a scherzino of his own that any one from Schütt to Moszkowski might have signed; he played something of Grieg's which may have pleased Mr. Finck and two or three ladies in the audience but which certainly left me cold; and he concluded this group with a performance of Liszt's arrangement of the waltz from Gounod's *Faust.* Thereupon there was so much applause that he came back and played his scherzino again. His répertoire in this *genre* was probably too limited to admit of his adding a fresh number. . . . At this point I arose and left the hall, more in wonder than in indignation.

Was this the musician who had been reviled and hissed? Was this the pianist and composer whom Huneker had dubbed the only real futurist in modern music? It was not the Ornstein I myself had heard a few weeks previously striking the keyboards with his fists in the vociferous measures of *The Wild Men's Dance;* it was not the colour painter of the two *Impressions of Notre Dame;* it was not the Ornstein who in a dark corner of Pogliani's glowed with glee over the possibility of dividing and redividing the existing scale into eighth, sixteenth, and twenty-fourth tones. . . .

This was another Ornstein and in searching my memory I discovered him to be the oldest Ornstein of all. I remembered five years back when I was assistant to the musical critic of the "New York Times" and had been sent to hear a boy prodigy play on a Sunday evening at the New Amsterdam Theatre. Concerts by serious artists at that period seldom took place outside of recognized concert halls, nor did they occur on Sunday nights. But there was something about this concert that impressed itself upon me and I wrote more than the usual perfunctory notice on this occasion. Here is my account of what I think must have been Leo Ornstein's first public appearance (March 5, 1911), dug from an old scrap book:

"The New Amsterdam Theatre is a strange place for a recital of pianoforte music, but one was held there last evening, when Leo Ornstein, the latest wunderkind to claim metropolitan attention, appeared before a very large audience to contribute his interpretation of a programme which would have tested any fully grown-up talent.

"It began with Bach's Chromatic Fantasy and Fugue, included Beethoven's *Sonata Appassionata*, six Chopin numbers, and finally Rubinstein's D minor concerto, in which young Ornstein was assisted by the Volpe Symphony Orchestra. To say

that this boy has great talent would be to mention the obvious, but to say that as yet he is ripe for such matters as he undertook last night would be stretching the truth. It should be stated, however, that his command of tone colour is already great and that his technique is usually adequate for the demands which the music made, although in some passages in the final movement of the Beethoven sonata his strength seemed to desert him."

I never even heard of Leo Ornstein again after this concert at the New Amsterdam (his exploits in Europe escaped my eyes and ears) until he gave the famous series of concerts at the Bandbox Theatre in January and February of 1915, a series of concerts which really startled musical New York and even aroused orchestral conductors, in some measure, out of their lethargic method of programme-making. So far as he was able Ornstein constructed his programmes entirely from the "music of the future," and patrons of piano recitals were astonished to discover that a pianist could give four concerts without playing any music by Bach, Beethoven, Chopin, Schumann, Brahms, Liszt, or Schubert. . . . Since these occasions Ornstein has been considered the high apostle of the new art in America, as the post-futurist com-

poser, and as a pianist of great technical powers and a luscious tone quality (it does not seem strange that these attributes are somewhat exaggerated in so young a man).

Nearly a year later (December 15, 1915, to be exact) Ornstein gave another concert at the Cort Theatre in New York. Here are my impressions of that occasion, noted down shortly after:

"Leo Ornstein, a few years ago a poor Russian Jew music student, is rapidly by way of becoming an institution. His concerts are largely attended and he is even taken seriously by the press, especially in England.

"He slouched on the stage, stooping, in his usual listless manner, his long arms hanging limp at his sides like those of a gorilla. His head is beautiful, crowned with an overflowing crop of black hair, soulful eyes, a fine mask. There are pauses without expression but sometimes, notably when he plays *The Wild Men's Dance*, his face lights up with a sort of sardonic appreciation. He has discarded his sack cloth coat for a velvet jacket of similar cut.

"He began with two lovely impressionistic things by Vannin (Sanborn says that this is 'programme for Ornstein'), *The Waltzers* and *Night*. A long sonata by Cyril Scott (almost entirely in

the whole-tone scale, sounding consequently like Debussy out of Bach, for there was a fugue and a smell of the academy) followed. Ravel's *Oiseaux Tristes* twittered their sorrows prettily in the treble, and a sonatina by the same composer seemed negligible. Albeniz's *Almeria*, a section of the twelve-parted *Iberia*, was a Spanish picture of worth. Ornstein followed with his own pieces, *Improvisata*, a vivid bit of colour and rhythm, and *Impressions of the Thames*, in which an attempt was made to picture the heavy smoking barges, the labours on the river, the shrill sirens of the tugs. The limited (is it, I wonder?) medium of the piano made all this sound rather Chinese. But some got the picture. A few laughed. *The Wild Men's Dance* convulsed certain parts of the audience. It always does (but this may well be hysteria); others were struck with wonder by its thrill. Certainly a powerful massing of notes, creating wild effects in tone, and a compelling rhythm. In the *Fairy Pictures* of Korngold, which closed the programme, Ornstein was not at his best; nor, for that matter, was Korngold. They were written when the composer was a very young boy and they are not particularly original, spontaneous, or beautiful. The difficulties exist for the player rather than for the hearer. . . .

Ornstein did not bring out their humour. Humour, as yet, is not an attribute of his playing. He has always imparted to the piano a beautiful tone; his touch is almost as fine as Pachmann's. But his powers are ripening in every direction. Formerly he dwelt too long on nuances, fussed too much with details. His style is becoming broader. His technique has always been ample. There is no doubt but that he will become a power in the music world."

Some time later I met Leo Ornstein and we talked over a table. He is fluid in conversation and while he talks he clasps and unclasps his hands. . . . He referred to his début at the New Amsterdam. "My ambition then was to play the concertos of Rubinstein and Tschaikowsky . . . and I satisfied it. Soon after that concert I went abroad. . . . Suddenly the new thing came to me, and I began to write and play in the style which has since become identified with my name. It was music that I felt and I realized that I had become myself at last, although at first, to be frank, it horrified me as much as it has since horrified others. Mind you, when I took the leap I had never seen any music by Schoenberg or Strawinsky. I was unaware that there was such a generality as 'futurism.'

"I spent some time in Norway and Vienna, where I met Leschetitzky" (this incident is referred to elsewhere in this volume) "and then I went down to Paris. I was very poor. . . . I met Harold Bauer and one day I went to play for him. We had a furious argument all day. He couldn't understand my music. But he asked me to come again the next day, and I did. This time Walter Morse Rummel was there and he suggested that Calvocoressi would be interested in me. So he gave me a note to Calvocoressi.

"Calvocoressi is a Greek but he speaks all languages. He read my note of introduction and asked me if I spoke French or English. We spoke a little Russian together. Then he asked me to play. While I played his eyes snapped and he uttered several sudden ejaculations. 'Play that again,' he said, when I had concluded one piece. Later on he asked some of his friends to hear me. . . . At the time he was giving a series of lectures on modern musicians, Strauss, Debussy, Dukas, Ravel, Schoenberg, and Strawinsky, and he included *me* in the list! I illustrated two of his lectures and after I had concluded my performance of the music of other composers he asked me to play something of my own, which I did. . . ." Ornstein looked amusingly rueful. "The audi-

tors were not actually rude. How could they be when I followed Calvocoressi? But they giggled a little. Later on in London they did more than giggle.

"I went to London because my means were getting low. I had almost no money at all, as a matter of fact. . . . In London I found Calvocoressi's influence of great value (he had already written an article about me) and some people at Oxford had heard me in Paris. These friends helped; besides I played the Steinway piano and the Steinways finally gave me a concert in Steinway Hall. At my first concert (this was in the spring of 1914) I played music by other composers. At my second concert, devoted to my own compositions, I might have played anything. I couldn't hear the piano myself. The crowd whistled and howled and even threw handy missiles on the stage . . . but that concert made me famous," Ornstein wound up with a smile.

He is a hard-working youth, serious, it would seem, to the heart. His published music is numbered into the thirties and his répertoire is extensive. He spends a great deal of time working hard on the music of a by-gone age, although he finds it no stimulation for this one, but to be taken seriously as a pianist he is obliged to prove to

melomaniacs that he has the equipment to play the classic composers. Of all the compositions that he learns, however, he complains of his own as the most difficult to memorize; a glance at *The Wild Men's Dance* or more particularly at a page of his second sonata for violin and piano will convince any one of the truth of this assertion. The chords will prove strangers to many a well-trained eye. I wonder if so uncannily gifted a sight reader as Walter Damrosch, who can play an orchestral score on the piano at sight, could read this music?

Of his principles of composition the boy says only that he writes what he feels. He has no regard for the rules, although he has studied them enough to break them thoroughly. He thinks there is an underlying basis of theory for his method of composition, which may be formulated later. It is not his purpose to formulate it. He is sincere in his art.

Once he said to me, "I hate cleverness. I don't want to be clever. I hate to be called clever. I am not clever. I don't like clever people. Art that is merely clever is not art at all."

With Busoni and Schoenberg he believes that there are no discords, only chords and chords . . . and that there are many combinations of notes,

"millions of them" which have not yet been devised.

"When I feel that the existing enharmonic scale is limiting me I shall write in quarter tones. In time I think the ear can be trained to grasp eighth tones. Instruments only exist to perform music and new instruments will be created to meet the new need. It can be met now on the violin or in the voice. The piano, of course, is responsible for the rigidity of the present scale."

Ornstein never rewrites. If his inspiration does not come the first time it never comes. He does not try to improve a failure. His method is to write as much as he can spontaneously on one day, and to pick the composition up where he left off on the next.

His opinions of other modern composers are interesting: he considers Ravel greater than Debussy, and speaks with enthusiasm about *Daphnis et Chloë*. He has played music by Satie in private but does not find it "stimulating or interesting." . . . Schoenberg . . . "the last of the academics . . . all brain, no spirit. His music is mathematical. He does not feel it. Korngold's pieces are pretty but he has done nothing important. Scriabine was a great theorist who never achieved his goal. He helped others on.

But Strawinsky is the most stimulating and interesting of all the modern composers. He feels what he writes."

Most of Ornstein's music is inspired by things about him, some of it by abstract ideas. His social conscience is awake. He wanted to call *The Wild Men's Dance, Liberty* ("I attempted to write music which would dance itself, which did not require a dancer"), but finally decided on the more symbolic title. "I am known as a musical anarch now," he explained to me, "I could not name a piece of music *Liberty* — at least not *that* piece — without associating myself in the public mind with a certain social propaganda." Just the same he means the propaganda. In the *Dwarf Suite* he gives us a picture of the lives of the struggling Russian Jews. These dwarfs are symbols. . . . He is fond of abstract titles. He often plays his *Three Moods*. "In Boston they did not like my *Three Moods*. They found my *Anger* too unrestrained; it was vulgar to express oneself so freely. . . . But there is such a thing as anger. Why should it not find artistic expression? Besides it is a very good contrast to *Peace* and *Joy* which enclose it." The *Impressions of the Thames* I have already referred to. With the two *Impressions of Notre Dame* it stands as his successful

experiment with impressionism. The *Notre Dame* pictures include gargoyles and, of course, bells. . . . I have not heard the violin and piano sonata, opus 31. Nor can I play it. Nor can I derive any very adequate idea of how it sounds from a perusal of the score. Strange music this. . . . Some time ago some one sent Ornstein the eight songs of Richard Strauss, Opus 49. The words of three of these songs (*Wiegenliedchen*, *In Goldener Fülle*, and *Waldseligkeit*) struck him and he made settings for them. Compare them with Strauss and you will find the Bavarian's music scented with lavender. "In the *Wiegenliedchen* Strauss gives you a picture of the woman rocking the cradle for his accompaniment. I have tried to go further, tried to express the feelings in the woman's mind, her hopes for the child when it is grown, her fears. I have tried to get *underneath*." But the *Berceuse* in Ornstein's *Nine Miniatures* is as simple an expression as the lover of Ethelbert Nevin's style could wish. Not all of Ornstein's music is careless of tradition. He was influenced in the beginning by many people. His *Russian Suite* is very pretty. Most of it is like Tschaikowsky. These suites will prove (if any one wants it proved) that Ornstein can write conventional melody.

Ornstein has also written a composition for orchestra entitled *The Faun*, which Henry Wood had in mind for performance before the war. It has not yet been played and I humbly suggest it to our resident conductors, together with Albeniz's *Catalonia*, Schoenberg's *Five Pieces*, and Strawinsky's *Sacrifice to the Spring*.

Leo Ornstein was born in 1895 at Krementchug, near Odessa. He is consequently in his twenty-first year. He is already a remarkable pianist, one of the very few who may be expected to achieve a position in the front rank. His compositions have astonished the musical world. Some of them have even pleased people. Whatever their ultimate value they have certainly made it a deal easier for concert-goers to listen to what are called "discords" with equanimity. His music is a modern expression, untraditional, and full of a strange seething emotion; no calculation here. And like the best painting and literature of the epoch it vibrates with the unrest of the period which produced the great war.

June 14, 1916.

THE END

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